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RAILFAN & RAILROAD

Contents

MARCH 2001 / VOLUME 20 NUMBER 3 RAILROAD / founded 1906 / volume 122 number 12

Features

6 **The Final Freight off the Camas Prairie** *by Bruce Kelly*
The end finally comes for the Second Subdivision.

30 **The Last Logger** *by Martin E. Hansen*
Canfor continues the tradition on Vancouver Island.

38 **Northern Lines Dash 9s** *by Bruce Kelly*
Sometimes, less is more.

42 **The Clearfield Chronicles** *by James A. Bacon*
R.J. Corman's Pennsylvania Lines.

58 **Countdown to Acela**
Amtrak's new speedster opens to rave reviews, then stumbles

In Focus/news-feature
62 Philadelphia trolleys by night *by Steve Barry*

Departments

4 **Publisher's Desk**/commentary *by Hal Carstens*
8 **Fanmail**/letters from readers
10 **Timetable**/railfan events guide
12 **Lineside Legacy**/preservation news *by Jeff Terry*
16 **Railroadiana**/product news and reviews
20 **Camera Bag**/guide to railfan photography *by Jim Boyd*
24 **The Engineer's Seat**/life in the cab *by Thomas D. Dressler*
25 **We'd Like You to Meet**/*James A. Bacon*
26 **Railnews**/news stories and photos
50 **Book Depot**/railroad book mart
54 **Videos**/videotape reviews
55 **Railfanning Is**/humor
52 **On The Menu**/dining by rail *by James Porterfield*
53 **Railfun**/cartoon by Curt Katz
56 **Transit Currents**/transit news *by George M. Smerk*
62 **Markers**/editorial commentary
62 **Museum & Tourist Line Directory**
65 **Advertising Index**/the railfan marketplace
66 **Final Frame**

on the cover

Canadian Forest Products SW1200s 302 and 303 haul the first loaded train of the day from the Camp A reload across the East Fork trestle over the Kokish River en route to the Beaver Cove log dump on northern Vancouver Island. Martin E. Hansen is your guide to this last surviving example of the pure logging railroads, starting on page 30. Photograph by Martin E. Hansen

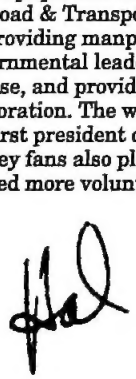
Publisher's Desk

New Jersey's Museum

ON SEPTEMBER 25, 2000, New Jersey Assemblyman Alex DeCroce sponsored a bill for the location and final site of the New Jersey Railroad & Transportation Museum. The museum will be located in Phillipsburg along the Delaware River, with a satellite facility in Netcong along NJ Transit (ex DL&W). The idea for a New Jersey railroad museum is not new. Railfan groups in the Garden State have been amassing locomotives, cars and a rare Public Service street car (No. 2651), for many years. NJ Transit has been generous in donating locomotives, cars, vintage buses and other equipment. Finding a location that would satisfy everyone was impossible, but a committee looked at sites all over the state before choosing Phillipsburg, which has a rich heritage in surface transportation. It was once served by the Morris Canal and the L&HR, CNJ, LV, PRR, DL&W, and currently the Belvidere & Delaware Railroad. Groups cooperating in the venture are the Friends of the N.J. Railroad & Transportation Museum, Inc., the Motor Bus Society, the Canal Society of New Jersey and the New Jersey State Archives. The 50-acre site, once a Pennsy yard, will offer a roundhouse and turntable, rail yard, gift shop, trolley line, an art deco theater, excursion station, freight station, bus station, a New Jersey diner and a reconstructed Morris Canal plane. A hobby shop and model railroad layout are also planned. The museum is designed to give visitors the feel of how ground transportation helped develop New Jersey as a transportation center. The bus collection includes buses from NJ Transit, former Public Service equipment and buses from smaller lines throughout the state. Most have been painstakingly restored to their original condition. One bus owned by the FNJRR&TM is a small 1938 Ford from Detroit, identical to old PSNJ vehicles, restored by Bill McKelvey to New Jersey colors.

Locomotives include a GG-1, assorted diesels from New Jersey lines, some of which came from other sources and have been repainted for Erie, Lehigh Valley and other local roads. Many pieces of equipment which once ran in New Jersey have been preserved elsewhere, because New Jersey had no preservation facility. Some fans would like to see Lackawanna 4-4-0 camelback No.952, now preserved in St. Louis, returned to its New Jersey home where it ran for so many years. An outdoor live steam railroad, the Centerville & Southwestern, originally built by Henry Becker, will also be rebuilt on the museum grounds. The satellite facility at Netcong is located 27 miles from Phillipsburg, and offers local and commuter rail service by NJ Transit to Hoboken and New York City. It is also located on Interstate 80 and U.S. Route 206. Netcong would provide additional parking, some equipment displays, and possibly a small artifact display area in the depot.

Instrumental in providing the stimulus which led to the concept of a transportion heritage museum were two organizations. The United Railroad Historical Society, an umbrella group covering railfan groups throught the state, actively bought, preserved and restored equipment. The second was the Friends of the New Jersey Railroad & Transportation Museum which worked with URHS in providing manpower for fund raising fan trips, worked with governmental leaders in getting legislation through the state house, and provided manpower and funds for equipment restoration. The writer was priviliged to have been elected the first president of the FNJRR&TM. Canal, bus, truck and trolley fans also played an important role in the project. Now we need more volunteers and, of course, money.



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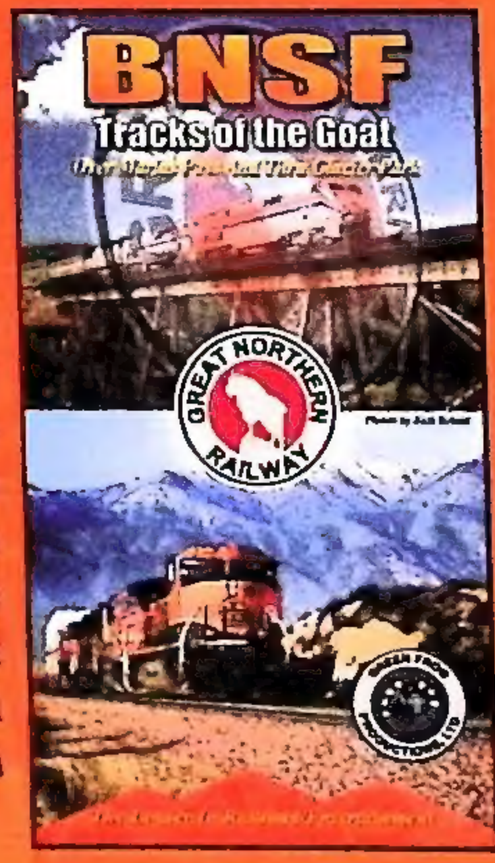

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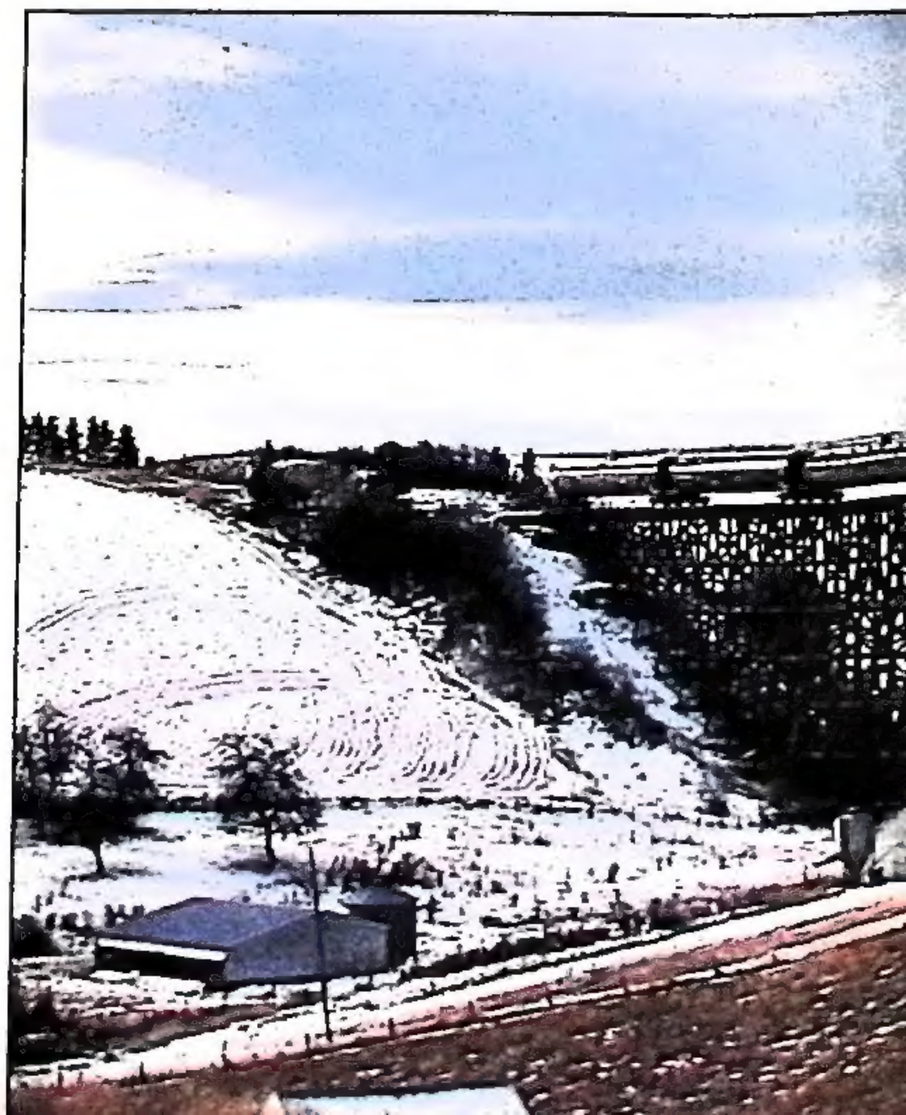
PHOTOGRAPHY: BRUCE KELLY

The Final Freight off the Camas Prairie

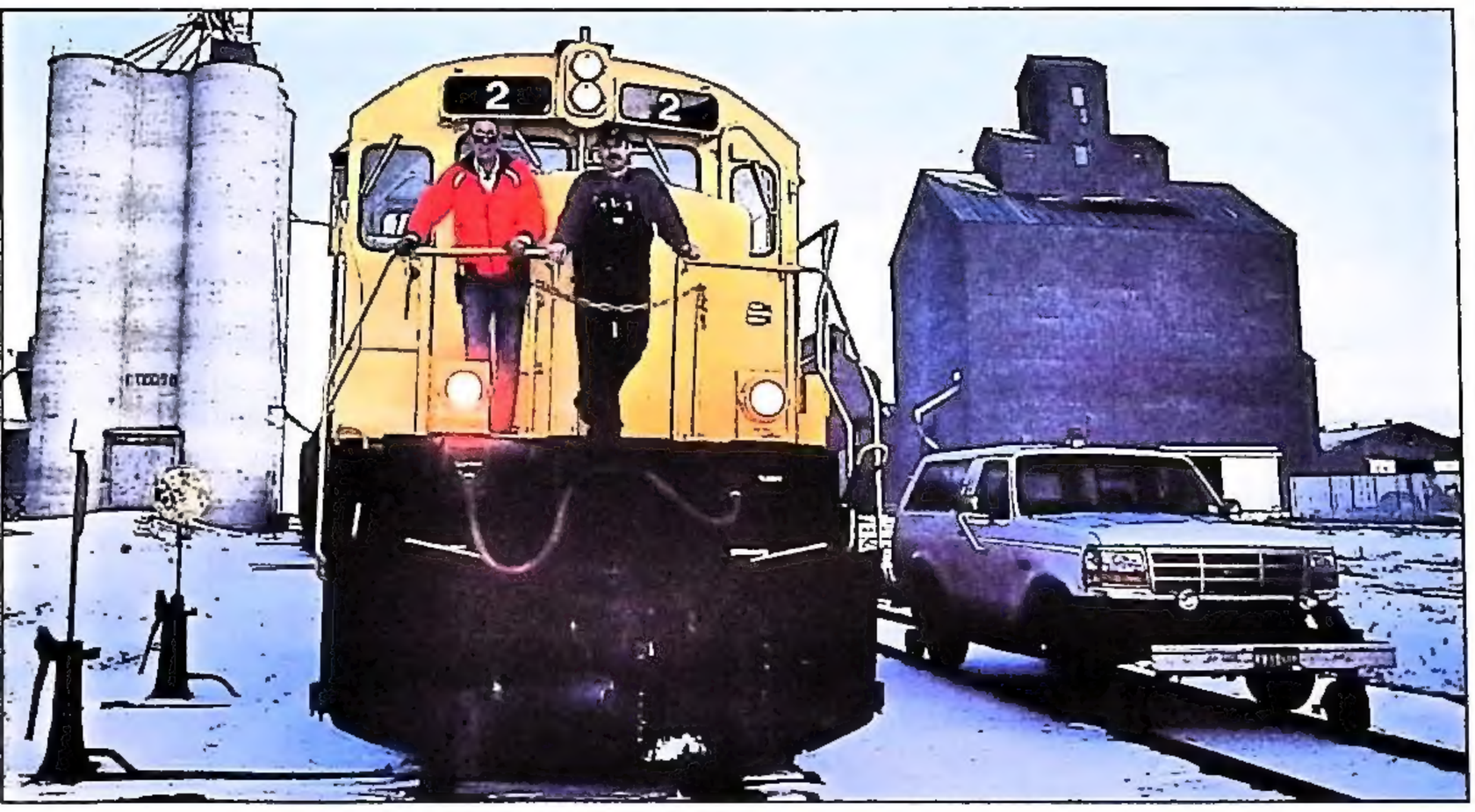
by Bruce Kelly

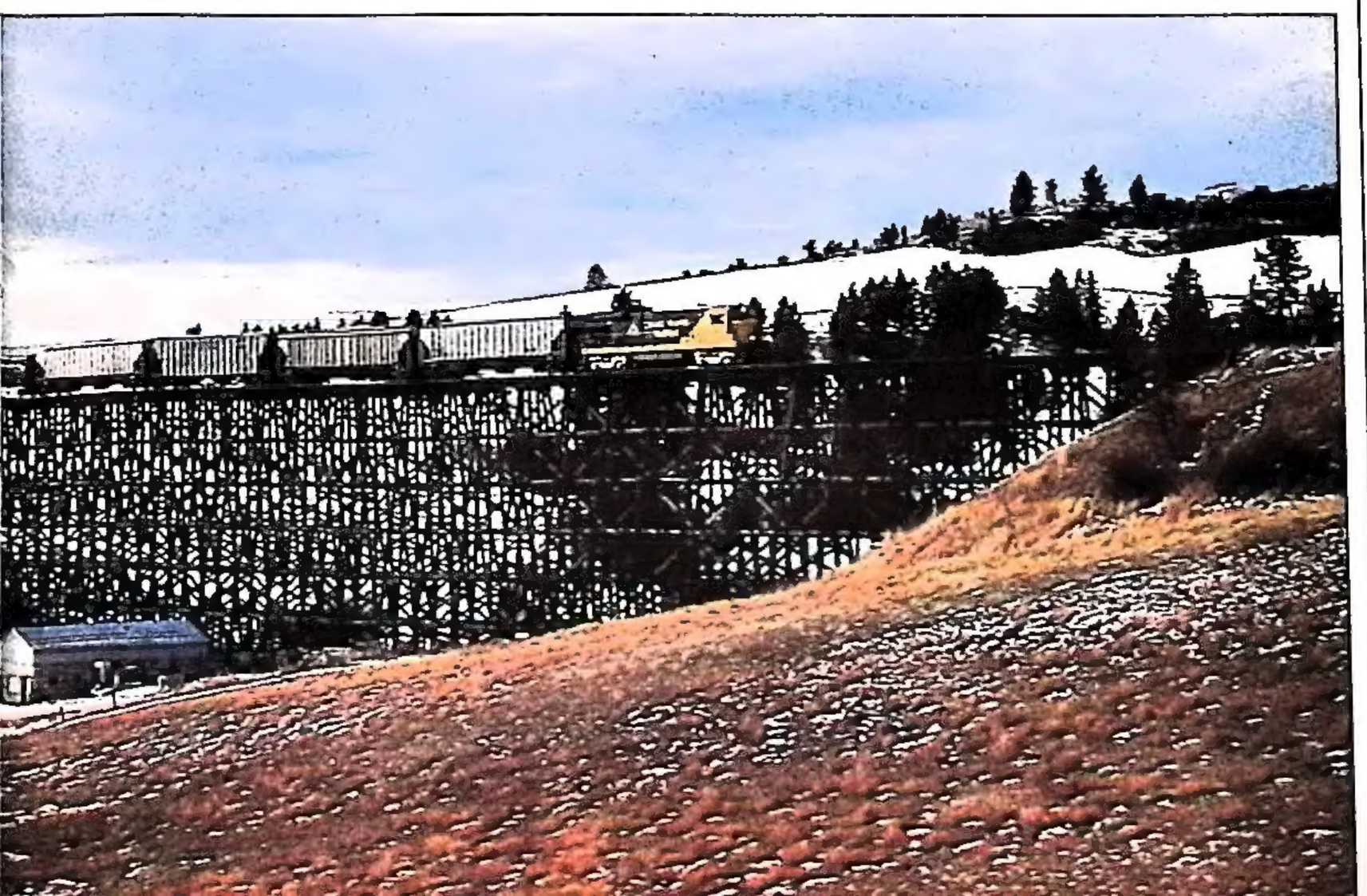
AS PREDICTED in the September 2000 issue, Camas Prairie RailNet followed through with its plan to abandon the Second Subdivision to Grangeville, Idaho, by operating its last Grangeville Local over the entire 66-mile branch on November 28th and 29th. A Reubens Turn had been scheduled for the 30th, prompting many railfans to wait until that day for their photos of the line's final run, but the Grangeville Local was able to pick up all remaining cars, thereby ending revenue service a day earlier than expected. CSP will still operate the first few miles of the branch to accommodate shippers at Lapwai and Sweetwater. With its mill at Craigmont now left without rail service, the U.S. Timber Company is considering the construction of a lumber reload facility at or near Lapwai. Most of the prairie's grain shippers, however, will have to switch completely to trucks. Athough revenue service appears to have ended for most of the Second Sub, CSP expects to run several work trains in order to haul down some 300 bridge timbers that are stored at Reubens and Ferdinand. These non-revenue moves might not wrap up until after the winter snow melts.

HALFMOON TRESTLE *trembled under the weight of Camas Prairie RailNet's last revenue train to come off the railroad's namesake prairie on November 29, 2000 (**above**). With "trainmaster" Dennis Bullard at the throttle, B23-7s 2 and 3 were easing their 28-car Grangeville Local down the three percent grade of Lapwai Canyon. The previous day, CSP chief engineer Jim Morefield was performing the air test as the local prepared to depart Grangeville, Idaho, for the very last time (**below**).*



POSING WITH THE LAST TRAIN IN GRANGEVILLE *on November 28, 2000, were chief engineer Jim Morefield and trainmaster Dennis Bullard (**below**). That's Morefield's hirailer on the adjacent track. A short time later, at 4:17 p.m., the Grangeville Local was just a few miles out of its namesake town as Bullard took her west into the Camas Prairie sunset (**above**) with four loads of canola and three empty LPG tank cars. After leaving the train at Cottonwood for the night, the crew returned early on November 29 for the final leg into Lewiston. Halfway between Cottonwood and Ferdinand, the Grangeville Local crossed Bridge 46 (**bottom**). After picking up two empty flatcars at Craigmont and 19 loads of wheat at Reubens, the train would make its final trip down Lapwai Canyon.*





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Fanmail

Letters from readers

Saskatchewan's elevators

As a veteran Saskatchewan railfan it was a treat to read "Something Big on the Horizon" in the January 2000 RAILFAN & RAILROAD, since many photographers overlook the prairies as a destination. Over the years I have taken many of the same shots that were featured in the article. To update the story, the elevators at Laura, Saskatchewan, were torn down in October 2000, proving that time is indeed getting short.

Fans may be interested to note that in addition to Nokomis, enclosed water tanks also still exist at Harris and Wartime and large Canadian Pacific depots are still intact at Regina, Moose Jaw, Swift Current and Saskatoon. Intact roundhouses can still be found at Saskatoon, Prince Albert and Biggar (the first two are still in use).

I hope other fans will come to witness the prairies before they are changed forever. We would love to see you here.

BRAD SCHULTZ
SWIFT CURRENT, SASKATCHEWAN

Stories from the prairie

I just went down to the grocery store and saw a copy of the January 2000 R&R. I am not a railfan (let's just say that I like airplanes), but my father sure is.

My father was born and raised in Herbert, Saskatchewan. He is a farmer, and we have hauled our grain to many a Pool, Paterson and Pioneer grain elevator. Needless to say, I can't wait to get the grain elevator article in the mail to him.

There are many train stories we could tell you about the Canadian Pacific and Canadian National. We've had friends killed, grain delivered, snow eight feet high on the line, chased cattle across the rails, squashed pennies . . . I even have a very old Chinese coin I found in a reservoir not far from the track, and you can only guess that it came from a coolie who was a long way from home. If you take the time to check out the restaurants in the small railroad towns, you will no doubt find a Chinese one (we in Herbert had the Tuxedo Cafe owned by Kenny and Hank Ginn).

LYNDSEY R. HAMM
VIA THE INTERNET

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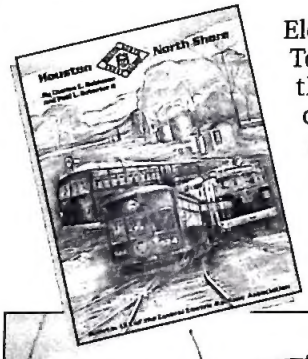
Houston North Shore

By Charles C. Robinson and Paul L. DeVerter II

HOUSTON NORTH SHORE RAILWAY



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SP 70-Tonners

The Southern Pacific 70-Tonners story in the January R&R was interesting (even to a steam person), but there's a flaw in Joe Strapac's list. SP 5115 could not have been "built 2/51" as I photographed it on the Patagonia, Arizona, branch in November 1950. I suspect that it was a "single" that came shortly after the initial batch; the construction numbers imply as much.

Cornelius W. Hauck
Cincinnati, Ohio

Along the Hudson

Joe Greenstein's article on Metro-North's Hudson Line in the January 2001 issue was most informative and extremely well illustrated. Here are a couple of constructive (I hope) comments.

First, there is no flood plain along the Hudson north of the Bear Mountain Bridge. The wetlands one sees on the east side of the track were formed when causeways were built out in the river shallows to provide a straighter track alignment.

The Mid-Hudson Valley north of the Hudson Highlands typically has an elevation of at least 200 feet above the river level, and there are relatively steep bluffs on both sides of the river in this area. The various railroads which once interchanged with the trunk lines along both shores did so only via tortuous steep alignments following tributary creeks.

In the region between the Bear Mountain Bridge and Peekskill the river bottom on the east shore drops off so precipitously that causeways were impossible, so this especially scenic stretch has three tunnels and significantly sharper curvature, with appropriate speed restrictions, as the track reluctantly follows the minute details of the river's edge.

The map with the article shows all of the old New Haven Poughkeepsie Bridge line west of Hopewell Junction as abandoned. Not so. About one mile in Poughkeepsie is still intact over 200 feet above the Metro-North/Amtrak/CSX grade. A *quadruple* switchback between the freight yard (near CP 75) and the Bridge Line (near the east abutment of the 1974-fire-damaged bridge) still exists and is used several times a week to serve local freight sidings and the former NH freight yard.

Chuck Benjamin
Poughkeepsie, New York

Wrong line for the 1522

As I was reading through the January 2001 issue I noted in the caption that the Frisco 1522 trips were run over the old Frisco line. It actually ran over the old Burlington. You may have confused this line with the Frisco River Division which ran south from St. Louis along the Mississippi River to Cape Girardeau.

Ed Heiss
Cincinnati, Ohio

Pennsy heritage

Readers might be interested to know the heritage of Pennsylvania 5908A pictured on page 27 of the January 2001 issue. From PRR 5908A it became PRR 4309, then Penn Central 4309, Amtrak 315, Amtrak 498, Conrail 4020, Norfolk Southern 1000 and finally back to PRR 5908A.

Ken Ardinger
via the Internet

A Smoky Mountains assist

I just read Ken Fitzgerald's article on Southern Pacific 1744 in the January 2001 R&R and am glad to see this fine steam locomotive running. In the article, several people were mentioned in the rebuilding of 1744, but one group of people that performed key and important repairs was not mentioned. This group was the employees of the Great Smoky Mountains Railroad in Dillsboro, North Carolina. Under the supervision of shop foreman and trainmaster Greg Dodd, one of the top steam mechanics in the country, we traveled all the way to Fort Worth to work on the 1744. We also did work on 1744's parts back home in our North Carolina shops during the cold winter months. I am sure that other people mentioned did key work also, but we would like recognition for our hard work to get this beautiful steam engine back on the rails.

Eric Pittman
Great Smoky Mountains Railway engineer
Whittier, North Carolina

Wrong town in Wisconsin

I enjoyed the article on "Steam Shows" in LINESIDE LEGACY in the January 2001 issue. The section on the Rock River Thresheree in Wisconsin was especially interesting, but it contained one error. There is no "Edgartown" in Wisconsin; the correct spelling is *Edgerton.*

Thanks for your coverage on these little-known steam locomotives.

John F. Fisher
Cross Plains, Wisconsin

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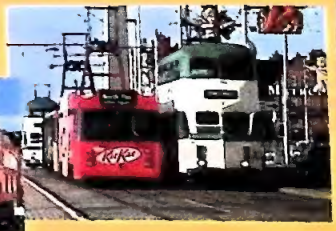

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Timetable

Railfan events guide

TIMETABLE listings are published without charge and are run on a space-available basis at the editor's discretion. RAILFAN & RAILROAD accepts no responsibility for date or time errors or cancellations. Notices must be received by the 1st of the month, four months prior to the issue cover date (e.g. January 1 for the April issue). Each issue will be in circulation for the full month preceding its cover date (e.g. April issue available during all of March).

RAILFAN EVENTS

DEARBORN, MICHIGAN, February 3-5 and 10-12. Algoma Central Snow Train from Dearborn and Royal Oak, Mich. All inclusive fares from $295-$405. For more information contact Bluewater Michigan Chapter NRHS, P.O. Box 296, Royal Oak, MI 48068-0296; 800/594-5162; *www.BluewaterNRHS.com.*

NEW YORK, NEW YORK, February 16-19. Trip to Richmond, Va., via Amtrak. Trip departs 4:10pm Friday, returns 12:25pm Monday. Tours of Richmond and Petersburg on Saturday and Sunday. Fare $510 double occupancy, $680 single, seniors 62 and over deduct $35 from each fare. Tickets from the New York Railroad Enthusiasts, c/o Steve Kalka, 315 Atlantic Avenue, Apt. 2K, East Rockaway, NY 11518-1105. Information phone 212/819-0822 (Tuesday through Friday 12:30pm-5pm).

STEAMTOWN NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE in Scranton, Pa., will hold the following special events. For more details call the park at 888/693-9391.

February 17-19, model railroad exhibit with garden railways and live steamers.
April 23-29, special exhibits, demonstrations and interpretive programs for National Park Week.
May 18, excursion to Tobyhanna, Pa., for Armed Forces Day.
September 1-3, Rail Expo 2001 with visiting rail equipment.

BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS, February 17-24. Florida Coast Special with your choice of Amtrak accomodations to Florida. Includes a 5-day, 4-night cruise on the classic ocean liner *S.S. Dolphin IV.* Fares start at $1100 and include accomodations and many meals. Information from the Mystic Valley Railway Society, P.O. Box 365486, Hyde Park, MA 02136-0009; 617/361-4445.

McCLOUD, CALIFORNIA, February 18. Snowflake Special Double-Header with 2-8-2 No.18 and 2-6-2 No.25 to Burney sponsored by the Pacific Locomotive Association. Several photo stops en route, plus a snow plow will be included over a portion of the trip to clear the line. Tickets are $139 for a non-reclining seat (dining-car style) or $155 for a reclining seat in coach (includes box lunch). Optional dinner after the trip $15, optional *Shasta Sunset Dinner Train* reservation for February 17th $65 (phone 800/733-2141 for dinner train reservations only). Tickets available from PLA/Key Holidays, 1141 Bont Lane, Walnut Creek, CA 94596. Information phone 925/945-8938. Major credit cards accepted.

BELLEVUE, OHIO, February 23-25. Ride on the Algoma Central's Snow Train with the Mad River & NKP Railroad Society. Ride to Saulte Ste. Marie via chartered motorcoach. Fares start at $260 quad occupancy. For more information contact Uptown Travel, 121 West Main Street, Bellevue, OH 44811; 800/837-8785.

WASHINGTON, NEW JERSEY, February 24. EastRAIL 2001 will be held at the Warren Hills Regional High School 10am-6pm. Confirmed presenters include Bob Bahrs, Thomas Baker, Steve Barry, Gene Collora, Kermit Geary, Jr., George Hlotus, Terry LaFrance, Vic Neves, David Patch and Scott Snell. Radio personality Tom Moran will be the master of ceremonies for the day. For more information see the ad on page 64.

NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE, February 24. Fairyland Express excursion train to Watertown, Tenn., with Mother Goose characters performing a progressive play on board the train. Round trip covers 90 miles. Fares range from $15 to $60. For more information contact the Tennessee Central Railway Museum at 615/244-9001 ext. 1 or e-mail *terry.bebout@nashville.com.*

BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS, February 24. Snow Train excursion to Brattleboro and Bellows Falls, Vt., using Amtrak and MBTA equipment via CSX and the New England Central. Optional side trips include sleigh rides, country inn luncheon and more. For fares and details contact Massachusetts Bay Railway Enthusiasts, P.O. Box 4245-BV, Andover, MA 01810-0814; 617/489-5277; *www.MassBayRRE.org.*

STOCKTON, CALIFORNIA, March 10. Winterail 2001 Railroad Photography Exposition & Railroadiana Show & Sale at the Scottish Rite Masonic Center, 9am-10pm. Scheduled multi-media presenters include Martin Burwash, John Gruber, Greg McDonnell, Dan Munson and more. Tickets $20 from Vic Neves - Winterail 2001, P.O. Box 23721, Oakland, CA 94623-0721.

OAK RIDGE/KNOXVILLE, TENNESSEE, March 23-25. Railroad Photography Weekend sponsored by the Southern Appalachia Railway Museum. Friday evening informal get-together. Saturday activities include morning photo train on the Secret City Scenic, multi-media slide shows in the afternoon (presenters include Steve Barry, David DeVault, Scott Lindsey, Barton Jennings and others), evening barbeque train and night photo session. Sunday trip on the Knoxville & Holston River. Fares are $25 for morning photo train, $35 for evening dinner train (both Saturday trains $50), $40 for Sunday trip, slide shows are free. For tickets write to SARM, P.O. Box

5870, Knoxville, TN 37926

TRAINS UNLIMITED, TOURS (P.O. Box 1997, Portola, CA 96122, 800/359-4870, *info@trainsunltdtours.com*) will sponsor the following events. Call or write for complete details.

March 24, Tijuana & Tecate Rail Adventure using steam and diesel on the Tijuana & Tecate and San Diego & Arizona Easter Trip originates in San Diego *(see separate listing).*

April 21, San Diego & Arizona Eastern railfan trip with Black Widow GP9 and SP 4-6-0 *(see separate listing).*

May 19-June 1, Great Canadian Rail Adventure from Vancouver to Jasper and Banff, Canboo Steam Special, more *(see separate listing).*

May 26-28, Canboo Steam Special with CPR 2-8-0 3716 from North Vancouver to Kelly Lake, B.C *(see separate listing)*

September 7-19, Inside Passage, White Pass & Northern Wilderness includes cruising the Inside Passage, plus the Fall Northern Wilderness and White Pass Steam Spectacular listed below.

September 10-18, Fall Northern Wilderness RDC trip over BC Rail from Vancouver.

September 15-18, White Pass Steam Spectacular with chartered double-header on passenger, freight and mixed consists.

September 22-29, New England Fall Colors Rail Adventure in Massachusetts and New Hampshire with eight train rides.

September 27-28, Rio Grande Spectacular charter photo freight on the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic.

October 6-8, Wisconsin Fall Colors Rail Cruise on the Wisconsin & Southern from Waukesha to Prairie du Chien with E-units and dome cars.

SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA, March 24. Tijuana & Tecate Rail Adventure. Diesel-powered trip over the Tijuana & Tecate in Mexico, followed by a steam-powered trip with an SP 4-6-0 over the San Diego & Arizona Eastern from Tecate into California. Several photo stops are planned. Prices start at $150 for adults, $74 for children. For more information contact Trains Unlimited, Tours, P.O. Box 1997, Portola, CA 96122; 800/359-4870; *Info@trainsunltdtours.com.*

BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS, April 6-8. Cherry Blossom Special to Washington, D.C., via Amtrak's *Twilight Shoreliner.* Trip departs South Station, Back Bay Station, Route 128 and Providence. Complete package includes lodging, meals and transportation in Washington. Fares start at $300 double occupancy. Information from the Mystic Valley Railway Society, P.O. Box 365486, Hyde Park, MA 02136-0009; 617/361-4445.

WHIPPANY, NEW JERSEY, April 7, 8 and 14. The Easter Bunny Express will operate at the Whippany Railway Museum for a 45-minute ride on the Morristown & Erie. Departures on the hour from 1pm-4pm. Fare $8 adults, $5 kids under 12, babes-in-arms free. Mail order reservations strongly recommended. Send check or money order to Whippany Railway Museum, P.o. Box 16, Whippany, NJ 07981-0016. Information at 973/887-8177 or at *www.WhippanyRailwayMuseum.org.*

BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS, April 13-22. Lone Star Special from South Station, Worcester and Springfield to Austin and San Antonio via Amtrak's *Lake Shore Limited* and *Texas Eagle.* All inclusive fares with coach class start at $1300 per person double occupancy. Information from the Mystic Valley Railway Society, P.O. Box 365486, Hyde Park, MA 02136-0009; 617/361-4445.

CAMPO, CALIFORNIA, April 21. San Diego & Arizona Eastern Railfan Day featuring SP 4-6-0 2353 and a GP9 in Black Widow paint on passenger and freight trains. Trains operate from Tijuana to Tecate in Mexico, then return to Miller Creek and Campo in California. Plenty of photo runbys. Prices start at $208. For more information contact Trains Unlimited, Tours, P.O. Box 1997, Portola, CA 96122; 800/359-4870; *Info@trainsunltdtours.com.*

GREAT CANADIAN RAIL ADVENTURE will operate May 19-June 1, featuring rides on Amtrak's Talgo train, Via's *Canadian* and the *Rocky Mountaineer,* plus a trip on Vancouver Island and steam on BC Rail. Prices start at $2795. For more information contact Trains Unlimited, Tours, P.O. Box 1997, Portola, CA 96122; 800/359-4870; *Info@trainsunltdtours.com.*

NORTH VANCOUVER, BRITISH COLUMBIA, May 26-28. Canboo Steam Special on BC Rail with 2-8-0 3716 operating to Kelly Lake. Trip covers 193 miles each way. Photo runbys will be held each day. Prices start at $358 ($448 Canadian). For more information contact Trains Unlimited, Tours, P.O. Box 1997, Portola, CA 96122; 800/359-4870; *Info@trainsunltdtours.com.*

INTERNATIONAL TOURS

ASCUTNEY TRAVEL (46 Tremont Square, Claremont, NH 03743; 800-TRAINS-4) will be sponsoring overseas rail tours to Spain, Sardinia, Siberia, Switzerland, Slovenia, South Africa, Cambodia, Myanmar, Peru, Australia, Hungary, Turkey, Jordan and more with an emphasis on steam. Call or write for details.

TRAINS UNLIMITED, TOURS (P.O. Box 1997, Portola, CA 96122; 800/359-4870; *www.trainsunltdtours.com*) is sponsoring the following foreign tours. Write for a free catalog.

Russia, several different departures between February 19 and September 16.

Guatemala and El Salvador, February 17-25 with steam, diesel and railcars, plus three double-headed Baldwin steam trains.

China, March 10-25, with main line and industrial steam.

Mexico, March 31-April 8, chartered diesel train on FerroMex looping Mexico.

Chile, June 16-24, visiting nine railroads plus six chartered diesel and electric trains.

Peru, August 5-18, with 12 charter trains on 7 lines powered by steam, diesel and electric.

Mexico, December 3-9, chartered diesel train to the Copper Canyon.

RAILROADIANA MEETS

WEST SPRINGFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS, February 3-4 Big 2001 Railroad Hobby Show sponsored by the Amherst Railway Society at the Eastern States Exposition Grounds, Better Living Center, Young Building and Stroh Building, 1305 Memorial Avenue, 9am-5pm. Admission $6, kids under 12 $1, under 5 free

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PHOENIX, ARIZONA, February 17. Everything Railroad Winter Train Show & Swap Meet sponsored by the Sahuaro Central Railroad Heritage Preservation Society at the North Phoenix Baptist Church Family Life Center, 5757 North Central Avenue at Bethany Home Road, 10am-3pm. Admission $4, kids 12 and under free with adult. Information: Ellie Barbieri at 602/494-7430; *ellieb0440@aol.com.*

GATS LIMITED will hold Great American Train Shows, Great Western Train Shows and Great Midwest Train Shows at the following locations. Hours are 11am-5pm (10am-4pm for Wheaton, Ill.), admission $6 adults, kids under 12 free. For more information contact GATS Limited, P.O. Box 1745, Lombard, IL 60148; 630/834-0652; *GATS@ibm.net; www.gats.com.*

February 24-25, Columbus, Ohio, Expo Center.
February 24-25, Denver, Colo., National Western Complex.
March 3-4, Live Oak, Tex., Civic Center.
March 3-4, Santa Barbara, Cal., Earl Warren Showgrounds.
March 10-11, Omaha, Neb., Civic Auditorium.
March 10-11, Daly City, Cal., Cow Palace.
March 11, Wheaton, Ill., DuPage County Fairgrounds.
March 17-18, College Park, Ga., International Convention & Trade Center.

GREENBERG'S Great Train & Collectible Toy Show will be held at the following locations on dates listed, Saturdays 11am-5pm., Sundays 11am-4pm. Admission: $5 adults, $2 children 6-12 unless otherwise noted. Contact: Greenberg Shows, 7566 Main Street, Sykesville, MD 21784; 410/795-7447.

February 24-25, Monroeville, Pa., Pittsburgh ExpoMart.
March 3-4, Pennsauken, N.J., South Jersey Expo Center.
March 10-11, Edison, N J., Convention & Expo Center.
March 17-18, Timonium, Md., State Fairgrounds.

ALLENTOWN, PENNSYLVANIA, February 24-25. Spring Thaw Train Meet sponsored by Allentown Train Meet Associates at Agricultural Hall, Allentown Fairgrounds, 17th & Chew Streets, 9am-3pm. Admission $5, kids 5-12 $2, under 5 free. Information: Bob House, 1120 South Jefferson Street, Allentown, PA 18103; 610/821-7886.

WEST DUNDEE, ILLINOIS, February 24-25. Rail-A-Rama 2001 presented by Venture Crew 9911 at Springhill Mall, Routes 31 & 72, Saturday 9am-6pm, Sunday 10am-6pm. Information: Thomas Leverenz, 307 East Streamwood Boulevard, Streamwood, IL 60107.

LAPEER, MICHIGAN, February 25. 17th Annual Railroad Swap Meet sponsored by the Lapeer Model Railroad Club at American Legion Hall Post No.16, 1701 Genesee Road, 10am-3pm. Admission $3, kids under 4 free. Information: Joseph Biondo, 15680 Imlay City Road, Capac, MI 48014-2300; 810/395-4966.

CLARK, NEW JERSEY, March 4. Jersey Central Chapter NRHS Train Show & Sale at Mother Seton Regional High School, Garden State Parkway exit 135, 9am-3:30pm. Admission $4, family $8. Information: Jersey Central Train Show, c/o Mitchell Dakelman, 334 South 3rd Avenue, Highland Park, NJ 08904.

DEARBORN HEIGHTS, MICHIGAN, March 4. 11th Annual Michigan Railroad Memorabilia Show & Sale sponsored by St. Albert's Usher's Club & Bluewater Michigan Chapter NRHS at St. Albert's School, Annapolis at Telegraph Road, 12:30pm-4pm. Admission $2, family $5. Information: Ray Nikolai, 4954 Roosevelt, Dearborn Heights, MI 48125; 313/277-2419.

WARREN, MICHIGAN, March 5. Gratiot Valley Railroad Club's Show & Sale at Macomb Community College, Sports & Expo Center, between 12 Mile and Martin Road and between Hayes & Bunert (off I-696), 10am-3pm. Admission $4.50, kids under 12 free. Information: Doug Kass, 281 North Avenue, Mount Clements, MI 48043; 810/468-4877; *www.michvhf.com/~gvrr.*

FAIRFIELD, CONNECTICUT, March 11. Station Stop '01 sponsored by the Housatonic Model Railroad Club at Ludlowe Middle School, 785 Unquowa Road, 10am-4pm. Admission $4, kids $2. Information: Housatonic Model Railroad Club Show, P.O. Box 234, Fairfield, CT 06430; 203/255-3795 (Friday evenings); *jhcc88@aol.com.*

COLORADO SPRINGS, COLORADO, March 11. Rocky Mountain Division of the Train Collector's Association Spring Meet at the City Auditorium, Kiowa and Webber, 10am-3pm. Admission $5, family $8. Information: Susan Deats, 1400 East Orchard Road, Littleton, CO 80121; 303/798-2679.

WOOSTER, OHIO, March 11. CJ Trains Spring Wooster Train & Toy Show at the Black Tie Affair Party & Conference Center, 50 Riffel Road, 10am-4pm. Admission $3, kids under 12 free. Information: Jon Ulbright, 941 Buchholz Drive, Wooster, OH 44691; 330/262-7488 (after 6pm); *cathijon@bright.net.*

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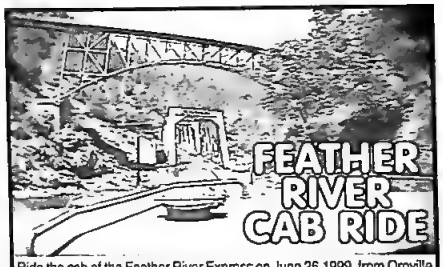

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New home for CP&W equipment

REMEMBER the Carroll Park & Western? It was one of dozens of small tourist railroads that sprang up across the country during the late 1950s and early 1960s. Privately owned and operated by the late Carroll C. Stahl of Bloomsburg, Pennsylvania, the CP&W rostered an eclectic mix of equipment that operated over a curving two-mile loop around his farm. Its one and only claim to fame was a brief stint in the movie *The Molly Maguires* in 1970.

Primary motive power was 1925 Vulcan 0-4-0 No.117 from the Jeddo-Highlands Coal Company of Jeddo, Pennsylvania. Stahl acquired the engine in 1958 after he made a visit to friend Walt Disney and rode his narrow gauge steam train at Disneyland. Upon returning to Pennsylvania, Stahl decided to purchase a locomotive and build a similar railroad of his own. It took two years to completely overhaul No.117, during which it was changed from its original configuration as an 0-4-0T into an 0-4-0 with tender. Stahl named it *Durango*, gave it a wild green, yellow and red paint job, and, among other things, a headlight from a PRR K-4.

One major obstacle in building the Carroll Park & Western was No.117's track gauge. As it was originally built for mining service, the 0-4-0T was constructed to the odd gauge of 48 inches. Stahl felt that it would be easier to modify the rolling stock to an odd gauge rather than the steam locomotive, so the railroad was built to 48-inch gauge instead of the more traditional 36-inchnarrow gauge.

A coach and combine were home-built from old Delaware, Lackawanna & Western wood cabooses which were dismantled, the frames cut and lengthened to 40 feet, and then reassembled with rebuilt sides and roofs to resemble 1860s-era cars. The trucks were, of course, modified to accommodate the 48-inch gauge of the line. Also on the property were two 42-inch gauge open platform wood coaches from Canada's Newfoundland Railway (which were purchased for $150.00 each and shipped to Pennsylvania for only $5000.00 more) which were converted to 48-inch gauge.

A second steam locomotive was purchased in 1963; two-truck Climax No. 3, formerly with the Elk River Coal & Lumber Company. The very last Climax built, this vintage 1928 geared steamer entered service in the mid-1960s after being refurbished to run on the CP&W. Its beautiful gloss black paint job was in striking contrast to the 'circus colors' worn by the No.117.

Unfortunately, the Carroll Park & Western was never the stellar success it could have been, and it closed down in the early 1970s. The equipment was stored for a time, but soon the locomotives, coaches, and cars were sold off, the track removed, and the railroad was largely forgotten.

But from time to time the question has come up: whatever happened to the CP&W's equipment? Many years ago the Climax went to the Roaring Camp & Big Trees in Felton, California, where it awaits overhaul and conversion to 36-inch gauge. But what of CP&W's 0-4-0 No.117, which seemingly disappeared after the railroad folded? Finally, after two decades in obscurity, No.117 has resurfaced. As the story goes, after leaving Pennsylvania it sat behind a small museum in Virginia for many years until it was sold again, and had sat derelict in a parking lot at Bayville, New Jersey, along with the homemade CP&W combine and coach, for the past 15 years. On October 5, 2000, the owner of the equipment donated it to the New Jersey Museum of Transportation, which has moved everything to its Pine Creek Railway at Allaire State Park in Wall Township, New Jersey. The last item to be moved was the 0-4-0, which arrived on the property on November 24th. The move cost $15,000.

No.117 will be a static display only, as Pine Creek's track is 36-inch gauge. The coach and combine, however, are being considered for restoration and would be regauged if this happens. Interestingly, the Pine Creek had acquired a CP&W ex-Newfoundland Railway coach shortly after the railroad folded and has stored it, pending restoration, for over 20 years. After an absence of two decades, much of Stahl's equipment is being reunited in New Jersey.

All the former CP&W equipment is in a serious state of disrepair, and to that end the museum is kicking off a fundraising effort to amass the estimated $75,000 it will take to restore the passenger cars and cosmetically refurbish No.117. They would also like to install an electric wheelchair lift in the combine to make it accessible to the handicapped, and at the same time space will be made in the coach to accommodate visitors in wheelchairs.

Since the CP&W was one of the earliest U.S. tourist railroads, and the cars and locomotive are unique to the line, might I suggest that they (or at least the 0-4-0) be restored as Carroll Stahl did in the early 1960s with CP&W's unique paint job and lettering. The equipment is an important part of post-steam-era early tourist railroad history, and represents a tremendous (if ultimately unsuccessful) effort by one man to keep steam alive for future generations.
— Thanks to J. R. May and Jo Schloeder

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Former Northern Pacific 4-6-2 No. 2153, a longtime fixture in an East Grand Forks,

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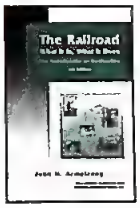

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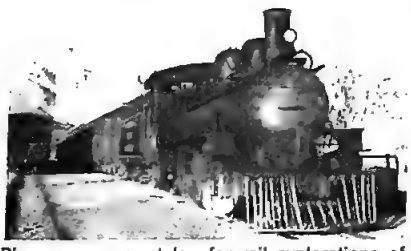

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Minnesota park, has been donated to the Minnesota Transportation Museum. The classy Pacific, built by Baldwin in 1909, was one of 23 class Q-3 4-6-2s owned by the NP which were primarily used on passenger trains, including the *North Coast Limited*. No.2153 is a sister to 4-6-2 No.2156, which was recently purchased by the MTM (it was previously leased to the group by the City of St. Paul). That locomotive was dismantled for restoration years ago only to find major damage inside the cylinder saddle due to water freezing and expanding, and has since been stored, still dismantled.

While No.2153 has been displayed outdoors at East Grand Forks since 1956, it is reportedly in good condition and mechanically complete, save for the normal problems associated with park locomotives (rotting wood, rust, etc.) Minnesota Transportation Museum volunteers are preparing the engine for the long journey to St. Paul via truck. Once it arrives in the Twin Cities, No.2153 will join the 2156 at the museum's Jackson Street Roundhouse Museum for a restoration project which will see at least one of them (and hopefully both) returned to operation on the museum's Osceola & St. Croix Valley tourist railroad at Osceola, Wisconsin. The museum's steam crew believes that the 2156's cylinder problems can be repaired and would like to restore both 4-6-2s at the same time, side by side at Jackson Street. Up first, though, is the overhaul of NP 4-6-0 No. 328, which was taken out of service in 1999 for an overhaul to comply with the new FRA Part 230 steam rules.

The museum is also the recipient of former Great Northern F7A No. 668 (built by EMD in March 1950) which has been displayed for the past 20 years in Northern Pacific colors at St. Paul's Bandanna Square shopping center (housed in the former NP coach shops). When Bandanna Square decided recently to scale back the "railroad" theme, the badly-deteriorated unit became available, along with an early NP gondola and Burlington (BN) caboose. And although the carbody is just a shell (nearly all internal components are missing, including the prime mover) the unit will be cosmetically restored to its original Great Northern colors for display inside the roundhouse.

Also new at Jackson Street is former Great Northern SD45 No.400, better known as "Hustle Muscle," owned by the Great Northern Historical Society. This unit, which was restored by Burlington Northern and donated to the GNHS over a decade ago, has long been a fixture at the Lake Superior Railroad Museum in Duluth, where it pulled trains on the North Shore Scenic Railroad until sidelined last year with mechanical troubles. In past years the GNHS has moved much of its collection to the MTM Jackson Street complex, and it was decided to move "Hustle Muscle" there as well. The unit was to depart Duluth for St. Paul in mid-December over BNSF's former Great Northern "Skally Line."

White Pass No. 52

Now in the shops of the White Pass & Yukon Route at Skagway, Alaska is the railroad's very first locomotive, 2-6-0 No.52, which is being evaluated for a possible return to steam. For the past 29 years the engine has been a static display in the town of Skagway, and is currently in a very deteriorated condition. The locomotive is currently owned by the Skagway Railroad Association, which has agreed to lease it on a long-term basis to the WP&YR.

Brooks Locomotive Works built the little Mogul in 1881 for the Utah & Northern Railroad, and the engine ended up on the White Pass in 1898 as the first engine acquired by the Pacific & Arctic Railway & Navigation Company (the U.S. entity that is one of the three companies that form the White Pass, which also includes Canada's British Yukon Railway Company, and the British Columbia Yukon Railway Company) At first numbered 2, the locomotive was given the number 52 during a 1900 rebuilding and operated over the White Pass Route until 1931, when it was transferred to the Atlin & Southern Railway's Taku Tram and used around Atlin, British Columbia, to shuttle tourists from steamboats to the WP&YR-owned Atlin Inn.

In 1936 No.52 was retired and stored, but was brought to Skagway in the mid-1960s, where it was cosmetically restored and stored inside the WP&YR roundhouse. In October 1969 it was damaged when the roundhouse caught fire, but was repaired, painted and moved to a display site near downtown Skagway where it has sat since 1971.

No.52 appears to be in very poor external condition; time and weather have obviously taken their toll on this once-proud locomotive. It has sat for years without being repainted; the headlight is missing and the side rods are disconnected. One of the driving wheels has even fallen apart. Even so, the White Pass shop crew remains hopeful that a thorough boiler evaluation will confirm that the engine is restorable, which will give the green light a full overhaul. Otherwise, the No.52 will be restored cosmetically for display.

Two-foot parlor car donated

The only two-foot gauge parlor car in the United States has been donated anonymously to the Maine Narrow Gauge Railroad Museum in Portland, Maine. Fully intact, including interior furnishings, the *Rangeley* was built in 1901 by Jackson & Sharp for the Sandy River & Rangeley Lakes. The car ran between Farmington and Rangeley, carrying patrons to the Rangeley Lakes House hotel. It was purchased by Ellis D. Atwood of the Edaville Railroad in the 1940s.

East Troy Museum Center

The East Troy Railroad Museum has received a $388,000 grant from the Wisconsin Department of Transportation to construct the Wisconsin Railroad Museum Center. The grant represents 80% of the building's design and construction cost. The Museum has begun a drive to raise an additional $760,000 to acquire additional property and complete the building. The building is expected to be completed by 2006, in time for the East Troy Railroad's 100th Anniversary in 2007.

The center will be patterned after the North Shore's downtown Milwaukee terminal at 6th and Michigan Streets. The Museum Center will contain a waiting room/exhibit area, gift shop, an office and storage area, rest rooms and a concourse leading to three station tracks and platforms. In the future, a 10,000 square foot addition could be built.

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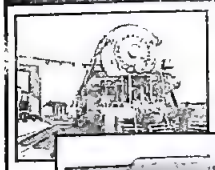

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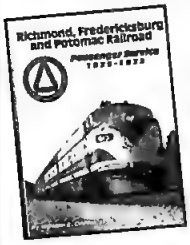

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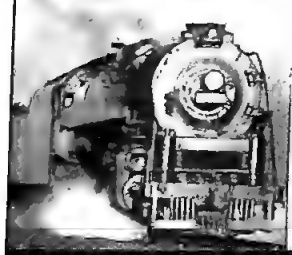
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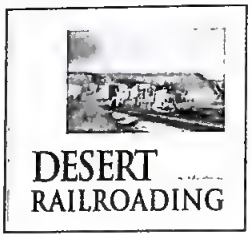
BOOK REVIEWS

Desert Railroading



By Steve Schmollinger from Heimburger House Publishing Company, 7236 West Madison Street, Forest Park, Illinois 60130; 172 10"×11" pages; $46.95

The desert is an acquired taste for most railroad photographers. Desolate and forbidding, it takes an immense curiosity — and a touch of recklessness — to venture into this uniquely Western environment in search of railway imagery. Steve Schmollinger is one of those curious adventurers.

Desert Railroading, Schmollinger's third all-color book, is a logical extension of his first volume, *Tehachapi: Railroading on a Desert Mountain* (Boston Mills Press, 1993.) In his latest effort, Schmollinger picks up where Tehachapi left off, moving east from Mojave to consider the four major deserts of the western United States on a broad scale. With a geologist's penchant for detail, Schmollinger separates the Great Basin, Mojave, Chihuahuan and Sonoran deserts into distinct regions, patiently explaining what makes each area unique. Into these vast wastelands, Schmollinger weaves the human thread of Manifest Destiny: exploration, emigration and the ultimate bridging of the unforgiving miles by twin ribbons of rail.

Desert Railroading is an educational, entertaining overview of a vast region vastly misunderstood by the majority of Americans. Schmollinger's best-researched and best-written effort to date, the bibliography alone covers two of the book's 172 oversized pages. None of the major players in the nation's westward expansion are overlooked.

At first glance, one might question the need for another volume on topics already explored by such authors as Mark Hemphill, David Myrick and John Signor. The answer begins with the Signor color maps on the endpapers of *Desert Railroading*. In a land this expansive, the definitions of corporation and state are merely lines in the sand. This is a book about place — "out where a train is a train" in the words of legendary editor David P. Morgan — and photographers find themselves alone with God in "soul-shattering silence" (page 46).

Dedication, passion and evidence of the spiritual fill the photographs in *Desert Railroading*. For Schmollinger and the 21 other photographers whose work is included in the book, the desert is far more than a

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necessary distance in the journey between east and west. The desert is the destination, a journey unto itself, and the images on these pages reflect the joy of exploring the unknown.

Little time is wasted drawing the reader into this marvelous lode of gelatin silver riches. Santa Fe trainman Hank Graham's dedication page photo of lightning striking behind a stack train west of Needles, California is a solid indicator of the dramatic images to come. Given an employee's inside-out perspective of railroading, Graham delivers some unique views, particularly his working man's portraits of engineer "Rocking Bill" Kemmerly (page 95), conductor John Lusk (page 137) and train order operator Merle Bagley hooping orders (page 162). You can smell the dust and diesel in Hank's electrifying study of sunset at Newberry Springs, California (pages 166-167).

Jamie Schmid is another working railroader who combines his dispatcher's operating insight with a landscape photographer's discipline to create breathtaking vistas beyond the ken of most lineside shooters. Schmid's view from the south rim of Abo Canyon, New Mexico (page 100) with one eastbound Santa Fe freight entering the oft-photographed defile while a distant westbound train passes the water tank at Becker, is a remarkable, low-key study that defines the reason for building the Belen Cutoff. A coil steel train leaving Ludlow, California (pages 152-153), Union Pacific steam engines 844 and 3985 snaking through Sano, Nevada (pages 20-21), the Southern Pacific departing Clifton, Arizona (pages 34-35), SP AC's on the Utah desert (page 60) and the rear dust jacket study of SP rails in a sandstorm testify to Schmid's photographic prowess. Note to the publisher: if anyone deserves a full color coffee table monograph, it's Jamie.

The visual palette expands with Howard Ande's fine study of Santa Fe freights meeting on parallel main lines in Kingman Canyon (page 158), Eric Blasko's evocative portrait of sundown on the Union Pacific in Caliente, Nevada (pages 80-81), Glen Icanberry's rousing pan shot of ATSF steam engine 3751 (pages 154-155) and Brian Solomon's moody rendition of sunrise over Arizona's Aubrey Cliffs (page 149). Scott Bontz contributes some stunners, particularly his views of SP's Salt Lake crossing (pages 24, 72-73) and silhouetted SD40s passing Pilot Peak, Nevada,on UP's erstwhile Western Pacific line (page 16). Brad Hellman defines the desert photographer's disregard for creature comfort with an other-wordly image of an eastbound UP train approaching the switch heaters at Pequop, Nevada, on a foggy sub-zero degree night (page 143).

Picking up the photographic gauntlet cast down by his peers, author Schmollinger checks in with some memorable frames. Morning in the Maricopa Mountains of his adopted home state of Arizona reveals a westbound UP manifest as the only sign of civilization (pages 10-11). A stormy night at Marana, Arizona (pages 126-127) explodes in an awesome lightning display framed by the descending crossing gates heralding an approaching UP freight. An undisputed master of telephotography, Steve offers Union Pacific intermodals meeting in Yermo as a textbook example of 500 millimeters put to good use (pages 64-65). In my favorite spread in the book, Schmollinger pairs a wide-angle pace shot of ATSF Warbonnets west of Needles, California, with hood units passing a Dust Bowl-era vehicle carcass east of Needles, effectively summing up the appeal of chasing the Santa Fe along old Route 66 (pages 144-145).

Taking full advantage of the 22" double-truck of *Desert Railroading's* 10"×11" format, designer Motomi Naito provides dynamic display throughout the volume. You'll hear no complaints about postage-stamp size photos here. There are occasions, though, when the book's gutter rises up to swallow critical detail, most painfully in the case of Vic Neves' portrait of the Rio Grande Zephyr at Grand Junction, CO (pages 84-85). Overall, Naito's layouts are crisp, stylish and understated enough to let the images speak for themselves.

Highly detailed captions accompany virtually all of the photos, cramming in a goodly amount of information that's not always germane to the image, but entertaining nonetheless. I would like to see more specific dates used with the photos — year and month is usually the most provided, and sometimes even the year is missing. What's not missing in *Desert Railroading* is excellent color reproduction. The book sparkles from cover to cover, which begs the question of using what appears to be a Fujichrome-shifted-to-carotene-Purgatory photo on the front dust jacket. Howard Ande has some nice shots in the book, but this isn't one of them. My cover vote goes to the J.D. Schmid sandstorm image on the back cover.

Still, you should never judge a book by it's cover, as the 172 pages of *Desert Railroading* testify so eloquently. You don't have to be a desert lover to buy this book. You'll be one when you're done reading it. For Schmollinger, Heimburger and company, *Desert Railroading* is a job very well done. — *TED BENSON*

In the Traces, The Railroad Images of Ted Rose

Introduction by Thomas H. Garver. Published by the Indiana University Press, Publicity Department, 601 North Morton Street, Bloomington, IN 47404; 812/855 8054; 152 pages, 12"x9" hardcover. $49.95.

It was always winter in Milwaukee. And there it was, in the first picture of the first chapter of Ted Rose's new book: the classic 300-ton Roberts & Schafer wooden coaling tower at the Chicago & North Western's Chase Avenue roundhouse, with the North Shore electric main line forming the western horizon. I could taste the bite of cold in the air. I'd just missed the Class J Mike by a couple of years, but I have a photo of that very scene. I attended photography school there and spent my summers at home, so for me it really was always winter in Milwaukee.

Ted Rose paintings will do that to you. It

may not be Chase Avenue or Hoboken or Proctor, but somewhere in this book will be such an image. It may be something you've seen or something you've just always wanted to see (like the Pennsy H10 at New Castle making a back-up switching move in "Errands"), but sooner or later, one or more of the 60 full-color images will get to you.

You don't need me to tell you that Ted Rose is one of the finest American artists ever to render an image of a train. He's already in the same league as the late and legendary Howard Fogg, even though their styles were distinctly different (appropriately, Ted and Howard were close friends). It's good to know that Ted is as recognized in the fine art community as he is in the railfan field. He works in watercolor, and his eye for proportion and detail are extraordinary for this traditionally "loose" medium. He knows his locomotives and his technique and combines them in rich variety, with atmosphere and humanity. His paintings are populated with railroaders and onlookers and disinterested bystanders, and his characters have a life of their own. I can't view "Yard Crew" without wondering whether that glaring fireman on the N&W 0-8-0 is gonna invite me aboard or holler at me to ". . . get the hell outa here!"

This handsome horizontal-format book has a clean, simple layout with the paintings uniformly presented in roughly 7"×10" images. The color reproduction is excellent, which is a major accomplishment for the paintings' often-subtle tones. Each painting is accompanied by a simple data block, giving the original size and date and a brief description of the subject. And don't take those titles lightly, as Rose considers them an integral part of the image. The book title refers to the painting "In the Traces," which depicts the blurred drivers and rods of a Pennsy M1a 4-8-2 at speed.

In the Preface and chapter leads, Ted goes into his thoughts on watercolor art and the railroad environment, and Tom Garver elaborates on those themes in the Introduction as he reviews Ted's growth as an artist. It is a compelling story from a kid viewing a fiery South Milwaukee coke plant at night to a rambling college student discovering blues music in New Orleans and an adult simply earning a living for nearly two decades in Santa Fe before a lifetime of images began to mature in his mind. (One story not detailed, however, is how his wife, Polly, got tired of hearing him griping about the dismal status of railroad art and challenged him to "put up or shut up!" So he started painting again, and the rest is history. The rail and art communities owe Polly a great debt of gratitude.)

I first met Ted Rose in 1959 at the University of Illinois, and encountered him again a few years later when he was laying out books for Kalmbach. We renewed our friendship when he got back into painting trains in the 1980s, and I published a number of them in R&R. Ted is a great story teller, both in person and through his paintings. He is an observer of the American scene and not the least bit apologetic about his fondness for railroad images. Seeing this book and reading about Ted's development as a legitimate and honored artist will make all of us proud to be railfans. His images will become a part of your rail memories and enrich the experience. — *JIM BOYD*

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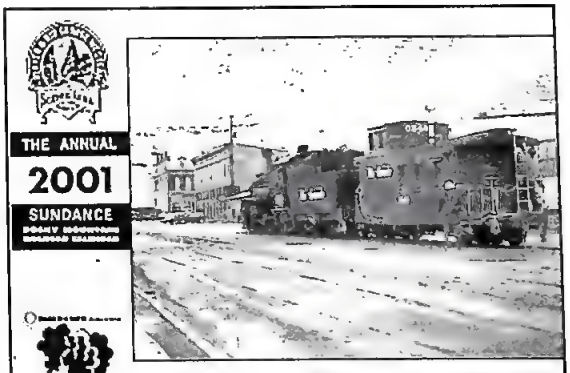

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Group night photography

FOR THE PAST COUPLE OF YEARS I've been a subscriber to an online discussion group (not a chat room) that posts e-mail commentary on rail photography and media topics. Not too long ago, a young fellow posted a gripe that he really didn't like those group night photo session images, saying that they were not "art" and were generally very contrived. He wasn't particularly fond of O. Winston Link's work, either, because it didn't seem "real." He decried this as "all technique and no art."

To some degree, he's right. Night photography is, by its very nature, heavy on technique. But it can also be highly creative and very artistic. O. Winston Link's work is definitely fine art, since he uses technique and vision to create images that are both visually stunning and otherwise unattainable. As in all "art," there are many styles and definitions and an infinite variety of tastes, from the classical long-hair culture to the long-haired hippie freak culture.

Railfan night photography runs the full gamut of technique and art, and it serves a variety of purposes. As a magazine and book editor, I hold night work in very high regard because it is a dramatic break from the majority of images. No matter how well composed or artistic, all daytime train shots look pretty much alike on a page layout, but the night shot is a welcome change of pace, even if it illustrates the same subject.

Now as for that "group night shot" business, it's pretty much all fun and not much "art." It makes no pretense at being anything else. But if you have any doubt how useful the resulting images can be, just look at how Mike Schafer used them in laying out my Barnes & Noble book, *The Steam Locomotive.* Even the Pennsy K4 on the cover is a group night shot (albeit a small group).

TWO PHOTOS: JIM BOYD

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TWO EXTREMES of night work are illustrated here. ***OPPOSITE:*** *The 1983 Richmond triple-crossing required the cooperation of three railroads and about a dozen flash-throwers, (including one atop a building and one on the C&O bridge in front of the U-boat), but more than 100 photographers got the image, with the flash sequenced about six times.* ***ABOVE:*** *At the other end of the complexity spectrum is the Tennessee Central FA1 in the Nashville roundhouse in January 1968. I was traveling alone and found the FA jammed inside the shed. I used two Press 25 bulbs to light the side and then climbed over the end walkway of the Alco switcher while the shutter was open to stand on the running board on the far side of the unit while throwing the flash on the FA's nose and cab, highlighting them from behind and separating them from the dark background (the same technique used on the C&O unit on the Richmond bridge). That night in Nashville yielded the only photos I would ever get of the TCRR.*

Keep something in mind: There are two styles of night work, individual and group. Although the techniques are similar, the difference in approach are quite significant. I learned night photography by experimenting about age ten with the "time" setting on a Brownie Hawkeye and was amazed with the picture that resulted. Donald Duke's 1961 book *Night Train* taught me the basic open flash techniques of Hastings, Shaughnessy, Steinheimer and the other pioneers in the railfan field. Over the next decade I perfected my technique with the help of my railfan friends, and our northern Illinois gang became a pretty good team for night work.

Open flash photography usually takes at least two or three people to do even the simplest lighting, since you need to move around the scene to add the flash where it's

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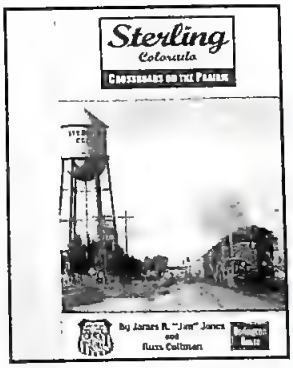

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RAILROAD AVENUE ENTERPRISES

STEVE BARRY

TO ADD "LIFE" *to a night photo scene, many sessions now feature "actors." Each year during the military celebration at Steamtown National Historic Site, NPS ranger Kenny Ganz arranges for several World War II "troops" to take part in the carefully arranged scenes.*

needed, and someone has to open and close the camera shutters. All of this is almost impossible to do alone and still keep the open time within the limits of the available light. The flip side of this is that open flash will work for more than one camera, and the camera operator can open the cameras of all the participants in the flash crew, so each gets an original slide of the shot. We would usually work with two or three people on any set-up. The idea was not necessarily to totally overwhelm the subject, but to fill in the flash where it was needed to make an attractive image. Interestingly, when it is well done, night flash work does not look like flash work — it looks like natural light. A lot of what the critics consider "real" lighting is actually well-done flash, and they simply don't recognize it.

When I was on the road with EMD, traveling alone for three years, I used my night flash techniques to extend my shooting day well into the darkness. The only photos of any kind I have of the Tennessee Central were taken on one beautiful snowy night in Nashville (the railroad was abandoned before I could get back to it). I was alone and really had to hustle to get off the Press 25 flashbulbs and still open and close the shutter before the scenes overexposed. That's where the experience and knowledge paid off.

Night photography follows the same basic lighting rules as studio portrait photography, from the standpoint of broad light, short light, hair light and cross light. You don't just throw in flash and blister the paint off, you carefully place the flash where you want it to "sculpt" the light and dark areas. The distance from the flash to the subject (not camera to subject) will determine the intensity of the lighting, and you can vary from harsh to soft by moving in and out with the same-size flashbulb. You set your f-stop exposure to match the bulbs you're using and adjust the open exposure time to accommodate that f-stop. Dimly lighted subjects are actually the easiest to work with, since they give you a longer open time in which to deploy the flash.

I think the first true "group" night sessions were those we began doing at Cass in the mid-1960s. They were an opportunity for a lot of people to get a spectacular image that they would never be able to arrange on their own, since it usually takes a lot of cooperation from the railroad to set up the equipment for such a scene. This stuff was not "art," it was just fun. It was never intended to be anything else. The resulting images, however, were very dramatic, if a bit contrived.

When doing an individual night shot with just one or two cameras, you can precisely control the alignment of the images. With a large group, you have to set up the scene so that it works for everyone within a ten-to-100-foot photo line. Thus, the bigger the scope of the scene, the more generic the set-up has to be. That's where you end up with the over-lit roster shots with black skies. You have to keep the flash out of the view of that same 100-foot-wide camera line, as well. On individual shots, you can place the flash with surgical precision, while a big group shot is best handled with the B52 "carpet bombing" approach. People who are good at individual night shots are not necessarily good when working with groups, since they often revert to the "one camera viewpoint" mentality. The group organizer has to consider the wide-spread camera line and the restrictions that imposes on the placing of the flash. It becomes a very challenging sport as the group gets bigger.

The triple-crossing shot done at the 1983 NRHS Convention in Richmond, Virginia, (November 1983 R&R) was probably the ultimate opportunity to use the group night session technique to produce a picture that no individual would have been able to do alone. It was a massive project of teamwork — and how often do you hear the term "teamwork" applied to railfan photography in a field filled with raging egos with 300mm lenses? And how often can you "share" your work with 100 other railfans?

Not all photography is "creative art." There is plenty of room for the simply attractive and practical. Group night scenes are just another way of approaching railfan photography.

My stock of big flashbulbs (at $6.00 apiece, *if* you can find them) is just about gone, and I'm pretty much out of the night photography business now myself. The reins around here have been turned over to "The Lumedyne Gang" of Mike Del Vecchio, Steve Barry, Kermit Geary, John Tully, Fred Jones, Joe Calisi, Alex Mayes and others who have purchased the high-powered strobes needed to replace the big flashbulbs. They have begun adding people to the shots and refining their open flash technique. Out West, Vic Neves and company are still blazing into the night, and others all over the country are exploring the potential of night photography. It's just one more aspect of railfan photography, but it's one of the more fun and rewarding ones.

The Engineer's Seat

Recollections on life in the cab

by THOMAS D. DRESSLER

The Death Notice

Or, "My Trip on Life's Railway to Heaven to the Great Roundhouse in the Sky"

IN YEARS PAST, the individual railroads published company publications, which detailed new or proposed locomotives, coal hoppers, specialized equipment and new passenger trains and equipment. The only such magazine I had the opportunity to study regularly was the *Norfolk & Western Magazine* and the post-merger version of this publication, *Norfolk Southern World*. In addition to espousing the usual company line about saving fuel and, of course, working safely, these magazines carried ads from various suppliers. To name a few of the advertisers in the *N&W Magazine* of old were the Timken Roller Bearing Company of Canton, Ohio; many banks and savings & loans along the entire system; the Ralston Steel Car Company of Columbus, Ohio; morticians; Cat's Paw No-Slip, No-Mark Rubber Soles and Heels; Kroger Grocery Company "Clock" store brands of bread and coffee; jewelers — most of whom were "Official N&W Watch Inspectors" (operating employees were required to have their watches inspected regularly) and while such ads would be frowned upon now, Dutch Masters Cigars and Price Albert pipe and Red Man chewing tobaccos.

Notices were published about employee promotions and retirements and, last but not least, the death notices and the "Innumerable Caravan. . ." The Innumerable Caravan" listings were posted to inform those still living of their once-fellow workers who had passed to the great beyond. A few years ago, my name was mistakenly listed in the NS publication *Norfolk Southern World* as having passed on to The Great Roundhouse in the Sky.

Shortly before the notice of my untimely demise appeared, I had decided to have my monthly Railroad Retirement Board (RRB) pension check handled via direct deposit rather than receiving the check directly via snail-mail. I completed an application form, and assumed everything was being handled as per my request. Shortly thereafter, one of the helpful RRB ladies called and said she would be in town the next day, conducting her bi-weekly consultations with recent retirees, and she would greatly appreciate it if I would stop by the local State of Ohio employment office, where these meetings were held, as she wished to discuss something with me.

At the appointed hour we met. She asked me not to be upset, but a mistake had been made in the changeover to direct deposit. A keyboard operator had hit the wrong key — a "zero" instead of a "one," and my status had been automatically changed from "among the still very much living and still collecting benefits" to "our recently, heaven forbid, dearly departed brethren whom had 'passed over the moon.'" She had been double-checking records, noticed the change in my status and was shocked at what she saw. We had kept in touch since my retirement, and she was certain that my wife would have informed her of my passing. She had already made the necessary changes, but said my next check would be late being deposited, and suggested it was likely that Norfolk Southern had received formal notice of my untimely, inopportune, unpropitious demise. I thought nothing more of it, knowing she was on top of the situation and everything would be okay. *Almost* okay, but not quite! The death notice had, in fact, been sent to the railroad, and in the very next issue of *NS World* the name of Ol' Tom "N&W" Dressler was posted in the "Recently Extinct" Innumerable Caravan column. Little did I know what was about to take place following the inopportune posting of said "Expiration Declaration."

My wife and I were out of town attending a convention. A few moments after we returned on Sunday evening, the phone rang. My wife Janet answered, to find it was long-time family friend Mr. Dick Hammond from down Danville, Kentucky, way calling to find out when, where and why I had boarded a "Life's Railway to Heaven" train, never to return to the Scioto Division ever again. Dick had received the NS magazine and saw my name listed therein, but he did not realize the magazine was several weeks behind time in actual dates of publication. This true Southern gentleman was all torn up, near tears, and in his own inimitable way, was awkwardly attempting to express his sympathy, trying not to be too inquisitive, but yet wishing to know what had gone wrong. He had tried calling other members of the group sponsoring the convention to check on me, but of course they, too, were all out of town and he could reach no one.

This simply added to his horror — that Ol' TDD may have passed by on his very last trip through the local "Lubritorium" (as locomotive service buildings were called on the N&W) and would be around to talk things N&W no more. Finally, Janet got a word in edgewise and told Dick it was a mistake, that I was sitting right there in the TV room with her, and she could assure him I was still very much among the living. Now Dick was really shook up — so much so he could barely speak and then asked his lovely wife Sally to talk with me. I explained it all, after which she told me Dick had been visibly upset at my "passing." Finally, he regained his equanimity, returned to the phone, and I explained it all again at great length. We had a nice long chat and a gigantic laugh — heck, we were talking on his dime!

I had still not seen the magazine, but the next day a couple of my local railfan buddies — all of whom shall remain nameless — had received their copies of the magazine and stopped by to naturally give me holy heck about it all. One of them actually accused me of trying to "double-dip," that is, try to collect death benefits from the RRB

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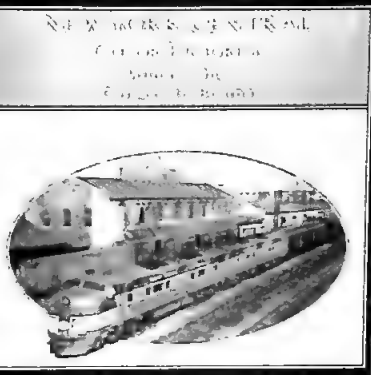

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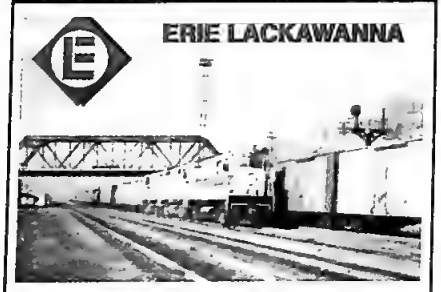

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while still drawing a pension. They had visions of getting even with me for all of the kidding and pure b.s. I had given them for years and years. All kinds of questions were posed as to how I had died, from my trying to pump up the air brakes on an N&W hopper car via the car-end air hose to simply exploding from all of the hot air I had been accumulating in my loverly person over the years.

I let them ramble on, acting puzzled, yet not acting the least bit upset. Then I deflated their bubbles quite handily, telling them that I had been informed of what had happened and that corrections had already been made. They were quite downhearted that they had missed yet another opportunity to get one up on Ol' TDD. A few days later, a letter addressed to my wife arrived, and when I noticed the return address — from Mr. Harold K. Vollrath of Kansas City, Missouri — I realized he must have been told of my recent "passing on" as posted in *NS World*.

Many of you out there in railfan land who purchase steam era photos already know Harold's reputation for having black & white negatives of just about any steam locomotive you can think of. Harold is a retired Kansas City Southern Railroad vice president of labor relations. Prior to that he was a chief dispatcher, and is also a quite active live steam modeler.

As soon as I saw the letter, it hit me what was going on. "K" as we all know him, was writing to express his sympathy and to see what happened. He knew of my continuing, debilitating problems with kidney stones, and I guessed he must have felt a stone had finally done me in me for good. Janet opened the letter and read it aloud with much amusement. Harold expressed his deep sympathy, telling her how much he thought of me, of my total devotion to all things N&W, and that over the many years we had done business together, I had been one of his best and most steady customers. Oddly, he never told me all of this mushy stuff when I was still "alive." He then asked what led to my passing. I mean, he was really sorrowful and trying to be nice about it all, yet one could tell from the tone of his letter he was hesitant to even discuss my passing with Janet. But still he felt he had to at least say a few good things about me and curiosity was getting the best of him. Possibly being concerned that I had left her destitute, he even included a self-addressed, stamped envelop for her hasty reply. Janet and I re-read the letter several times, and discussed the implications of the problems striking an incorrect key on the ubiquitous computer keyboard can cause. However, wanting to continue being my usual agitator-type self, I absolutely could not let this opportunity slide by without having some *fun*.

(As to my being an agitator, well, the president of Local 2116 of the United Steel Workers of America union to which I belonged for 15 years, said "Tom, you know what you are?" I said "No, what am I?" He asked, "What do they call the thing in the middle of the old time, round washing machines that went back and forth, back and forth?" Without thinking, I replied "The agitator?" and he just looked at me and smiled. He slowly turned and walked off, leaving me standing there with a look of "Dang that guy, he got me that time!")

I told Mrs. D that, just for pure orneriness, "After supper I will call Kansas and just hope Harold answers the phone." There is one hour difference between Ohio and Kansas time, so I waited until I felt the Vollraths were away from the dinner table relaxing, reading their newspaper and possibly discussing the passing of "Ol' Tom Dressler, the guy who loved the N&W more than life. The guy who would rather be running an N&W locomotive than anything else on this earth." I dialed the phone, and after about five rings Mr. V answered. I was feeling my oats by then and asked, "Is this Mr. Harold K. Vollrath, the eminent railroad photographer and retired Kansas City Southern vice president?" He replied "Yes, it is. May I ask who is calling?" I hesitated for effect and then said "This is Mr. Dressler, Mr. Thomas Dressler, retired N&W/NS locomotive engineer calling." I was tempted to add "from Heaven," but I was afraid of laughing out loud.

Dead silence for the longest time. Then some muttering and searching for words. All the while, I was trying to keep from bursting out laughing at his predicament . I could just see things running through his mind — "Wow, I wonder if he read my letter to Janet? I'll bet that rotten so-and-so is thinking I never said those things to him while he was living." Or maybe he was thinking someone was playing a dirty trick on him, but just who would be ghoulish enough to pull such a dastardly deed except Tom Dressler and after all, he — supposedly — just recently had passed through the Pearly Gates. Maybe he was having a nightmare!

Many, many things could have been going through his mind. When he finally regained his composure he stammered "Well, well, I don't understand. I thought, well, I was told you . . ." and more mumbling. I could stand it no longer. I said "Harold, this is Tom. I am not dead. I am still among the living and breathing. I am doing as well as could be expected given the kidney problems." I gave him a quick synopsis of what had taken place and in his usual calm, cool, calculated, dispatcherly manner, he finally said, "Well, I'll be darned."

He said Charlie Winters, another rail photographer and retired N&W/NS conductor, saw my name in the company magazine and called him immediately to tell him I was "gone." We really had a good chuckle over the turn of events, visited for a while — not as long as with Dick Hammond, as it was my dime this time — and said good-bye. To this very day we still keep in touch via snail-mail and e-mail. And yes, I am still purchasing steam locomotive portraits from "K."

For many years I have said that the only reason I ever read the local newspaper, such as it is, is to see if my name is, or thankfully is not, in the obituaries. If not, I know I have at least one more day to live. I hope that one of these days — though hopefully not for many more years — I do make it to the Great Roundhouse in the Sky. In the meantime, I am keeping steam up and a good fire in the old firebox, shoveling in lots of coal now so later on there will be no ungodly hot temperatures when I detrain at the end of my journey on "Life's Railway to Heaven," and I won't have to shovel coal eternally into Satan's devilish furnace.

We'd Like You To Meet

Introducing our Cover One winners

James A. Bacon

This 49-year-old plastics machinery technician has been interested in railroading as long as he can remember. My grandad worked in the coal mines near Greensburg, Pennsylvania, and later as an electrician for PRR. Neither of my folks cared for the typical tourist traps, so family vacations always included several days around railroad museums and the like, one of the first being the East Broad Top Railroad. I still visit the EBT frequently. My rail photography started there with a $15.00 Sears 35mm camera. I moved up to a Miranda SLR in 1971.

After getting started in life, I spent my vacations in the 1970s exploring the Chesapeake & Ohio in West Virginia, inspired by Al Staufer's book *C&O Power*. When Ross Rowland began running steam on the C&O, I was literally in heaven for four years.

Back at home, which is in extreme northeastern Ohio, I spent my off-hours time building a house, styled like a small country depot, with a genuine 1923 ex-C&O wooden caboose against the platform. I also tinkered with old vehicles and worked at building a one-fifth scale (12") gauge) live steamer, which I had started in 1969 after meeting Howard Murphy from nearby Warren, Ohio. Howard owns a 1938 Ottaway miniature steam train, and taught me to run his machine tools. The live steamer first turned a wheel in 1982.

During 1983, with friend Tom Horn, I purchased the "721", a 1918 ex-IC 52-seat heavyweight coach. We spent the next nine years running the car behind 765, 1218 and 611. My wife considers the 611 to be the finest steam loco ever built; however, my favorite is C&O's H-8 Allegheny. The coach is currently in Michigan, but it is hoped a move to a short line closer to home is coming in 2001. Mixed in around all this was some photography of the local rail scene and the beginnings of a railroad for the live steamer.

In 1994 I developed an interest in some of the lesser-known Pennsylvania rail lines, and R.J. Corman's purchase of the Clearfield Cluster from Conrail provided an impetus to study the area and put it in the spotlight. The ex-PRR Renovo Division is also in my sights.

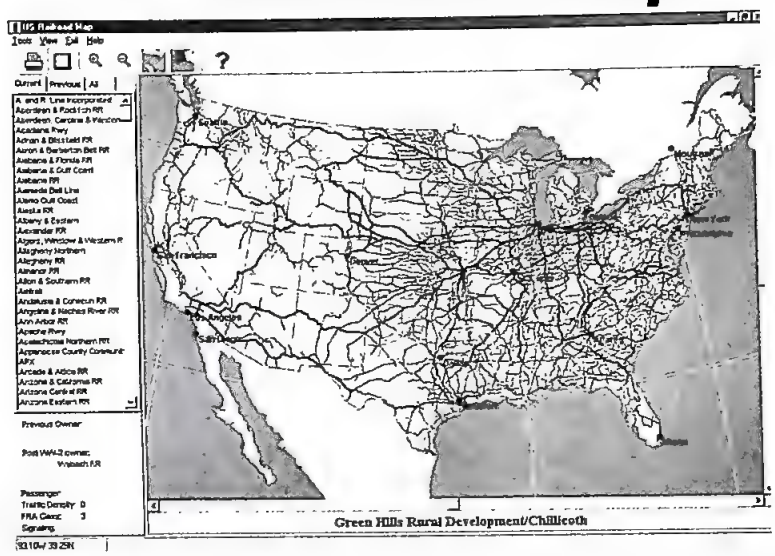
My tolerant wife, Jo Ann, has four-legged horses, so we've named our place the Horsetrax Farm. Currently, the miniature railroad is nearing completion with over 1400 feet of track running back through the woods. Still to be built is the end-point turnaround, a rough representation of Ophir Loop on the Rio Grande Southern, but with much lower trestles.

For rail photography, I use an old but reliable Olympus OM-2 with a variety of lenses for slides, shooting mostly Kodachrome 200, and an Mamiya RB-67 for b&w and copy work. I dabbled with Super-8 sound movies in the '70s, but have not done any video; I prefer buying professionally made tapes done with top-notch equipment.

See you along the tracks in Pennsylvania . . .

— *James A. Bacon*

US Railroad Map



Ron Paludan's US Railroad Map contains data for the entitre US railroad network. Just move and click the mouse on the map to see current and historical data on specific stretches of track on current and abandoned railroads. Visit www.signalcc.com for more info.

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Railnews

This month's top stories and photos

Amtrak

ACELA DEBUT: Amtrak's long-awaited Acela service between Washington and Boston began on Monday, December 11, 2000. The carrier's initial euphoria was short-lived, however, as several Acela runs later in the week were scrubbed due to equipment failure. With just one Acela train set in service during the first week, Metroliner equipment was substituted. See related story on page 58.

CUSTOMS CHECKS SPEEDED UP: Passengers on the *Maple Leaf* and *Adirondack* must now provide Amtrak with citizenship information and documentation needed to enter the United States or Canada when purchasing tickets or making reservations. The information is forwarded to customs officials, who can then make background checks before the train reaches the border, speeding crossings at Niagara Falls and Rouses Point, New York.

GUN BATTLE IN CHICAGO: Amtrak police, Chicago police and federal Drug Enforcement Agency officers were interviewing two passengers who had arrived on the *Lake Shore Limited* at Chicago Union Station on December 12th when an officer noticed that one of the passengers was armed. The following exchange of gunfire ended with the death of one suspect, while a Chicago police officer and the second suspect were wounded. No injuries were reported to waiting passengers. The incident occurred near the South Concourse waiting room.

Via Rail

NIGHTSTOCK PURCHASE: Alstom has have been awarded an order from VIA Rail for 139 Nightstock coaches, including 47 coaches, 20 restaurant cars and 72 sleeping cars. The cars were built in the mid-'90s for a consortium of European railways, but never were put into service. Delivery will begin immediately and should be completed by July. VIA Rail plans to use the new equipment for additional services in the Quebec City-Windsor corridor, and to improve overnight services between Toronto and Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver, and Montreal, Halifax and Gaspé. The first cars should enter regular service in September.

NJ Transit

NEW EQUIPMENT ON ORDER: 24 ALP46 electric locomotives are on order from Adtranz for delivery late in 2001. The double-ended 7100 h.p. units will supplement NJ Transit's current fleet of 32 electric locomotives. The new units are 25 percent more powerful than the existing ALP44s and have twice the HEP capacity. Starting tractive effort is nearly 40 percent greater than the ALP44s. In addition, negotiations are under way for 33 new diesel locomotives.

The new power will haul 200 single level passenger cars to be delivered by the fall of 2002. Some 200 bilevel cars are being designed, and their purchase depends on the availability of funding. The physical plant will also be improved to accommodate the added traffic. A new yard is planned for Morrisville, Pennsylvania, on the Northeast Corridor, while facilities in Hoboken, Woodbine and Suffern on former Erie Lackawanna lines will be expanded.

AMT

NEW SERVICE TO DELSON: Montreal's Agence Métropolitain de Transports will begin commuter service on a new route running southeast from Windsor Station to Delson, Quebec, over the Canadian Pacific Adirondack Subdivision starting in September 2001. The new service is a pilot project expected to operate for at least two years. The seven recently acquired AMT F59PHs will be used in the service.

Vermont Rail System

BURLINGTON COMMUTER SERVICE: On December 4th, the *Champlain Flyer* began weekday service over the Vermont Railway's former Rutland main line between Burlington and Charlotte, 13 miles, with one intermediate stop at Shelburne. Northbounds leave Charlotte at 7:00 a.m., 8:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. Southbounds leave Burlington at 7:30 a.m., 5:30 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. The timetable will be adjusted to reflect demand. Sponsored by the Vermont Agency for Transportation, the new service uses a push-pull set of leased Virginia Railway Express demotored RDC's hauled by a specially painted, regularly assigned Vermont Railway GP38 on the south end. The locomotive has been fitted with a small HEP package providing power for up to three cars. Longer consists require the use of a boxcar equipped with a larger HEP set. See **page 27**.

Denver *Ski Train*

NEW POWER: Amtrak F40PHs Nos.242, 283 and 289, painted in the Grande Gold single stripe scheme, have been leased from Amtrak for use as the regularly assigned power for Ansco's *Ski Train*. The units were overhauled and painted by VMV Enterprises in Paducah, Kentucky, and arrived in Denver in early December.

Canadian Pacific

FLAGS FALL: Canadian Pacific Railway has ceased all reference to the Delaware & Hudson and Soo Line railroads effective December 1, 2000. In a recent corporate realignment, CPR designated the former St. Lawrence & Hudson, which included the Delaware & Hudson, as the new Eastern Network. The former Heavy Haul U.S. property, mainly former Soo Line territory, was also fully integrated into the CPR. The Delaware & Hudson Railway has received authority from New York and Pennsylvania to operate under the assumed name of Canadian Pacific Railway. Former D&H territory is now called the CPR Northeast U.S. Service Area, while the former Soo Line is the CPR United States Service Area.

Ironically, CPR Heritage unit D&H 7312 was released from Ogden Shops in November. The former Lehigh Valley GP38-2 will work in former D&H territory and is named *B.C. O'Brien* in honor of the longtime D&H Penn Division engineer.

Union Pacific

CENTENNIAL DAMAGED: Union Pacific's sole remaining DDA40X Centennial diesel, No.6936, hit a truckload of mud at a grade crossing in Vacherie, Louisiana on November 30th. One UP employee in the cab and the truck driver were killed. The locomotive suffered damage to the nose and cab interior, and will be repaired.

Iron Road

LEASE DISPUTE: In December, Iron Road's Bangor & Aroostook and Canadian Atlantic railroads returned 28 diesels and several dozen freight cars to Helm Leasing. Helm and Iron Road have been embroiled in a dispute over lease payments and the condition and serviceability of the locomotives. The railroad asserts that the units were received in poor condition, while Helm claims the railroad failed to properly maintain them. A Maine court directed the railroad to return the rolling stock while the dispute is being settled.

LTV Mining

MINE CLOSES; RAILROAD TO QUIT: LTV Steel has announced that iron mining and pellet production at the LTV facility in Hoyt Lakes, Minnesota, will end on February 24, 2001. The mine can no longer provide taconite pellets of competitive quality and cost. The mine and rail facilities will be preserved for possible future use, according to Minnesota law. LTV will operate trains until the middle of January, when the Soo locks close, ending the Great Lakes shipping season. LTV's former Erie Mining diesel fleet, including the F9s, will be shut down and likely sold. The final end date of rail operations has not yet been established.

Bombardier

HIGH SPEED TURBINE TESTED: The prototype High Speed Fossil Fuel locomotive has successfully completed several test runs at the Bombardier plant in La Pocatiere, Quebec. The unit represents the first successful non-aerospace application of the 5000 h.p. Pratt & Whitney ST40 turbine engine. The project is sponsored by the Federal Railroad Administration in an effort to produce a lightweight, high horsepower non-electric locomotive for use on new high-speed passenger rail lines to eliminate the need to electrify future high speed lines.

JIM SHAUGNESSY

Champlain Flyer debuts

Leased Vermont Railway GP38 No.202 leads the *Champlain Flyer* commuter consist south out of Burlington, Vermont on December 4th, 2000. Rolling stock includes demotored RDC's leased from Virginia Railway Express and a boxcar containing HEP equipment. See **page 26**.

TOM SAVIO

Been to 'Frisco, eh?

CP Rail System's *Royal Canadian Pacific* consist made its first international run from November 3rd to12th to commemorate CP Limited's purchase of the newly restored Fairmont Hotel in San Francisco. The train ran over CPR from Calgary to Cranbrook via Golden, then over Union Pacific from Eastport to San Francisco via Portland, Klamath Falls, Oakland and San Jose.

CASEY THOMASON

Heart of Georgia

The Heart of Georgia Railroad is operating over former SAL trackage between Mahrt, Alabama, and Preston, Georgia, previously run by Georgia Southwestern. HOG 1209 and 1109, former Canadian National GP9s, pulled a train of pulpwood into Cordele, Georgia on October 27, 2000. Power is usually kept at Cordele, with a daylight turn to Americus and a nighttime job to Vidalia. Interchange is made with Georgia Central at Vidalia, CSX at Cordele and Georgia Southwestern at Americus.

The Skunk returns

California Western "Skunk" motor car No.M-200 now operates on the Pacific Locomotive Association's Niles Canyon Railway at Sunol, California. The railbus returned to service on November 5, 2000, after having a Cummins diesel engine installed.

FRED JAMES

JIM SHAUGHNESSY

Guilford safety cabs

Twenty former Canadian National GP40-2W's and GP40-2LW's, numbered 500-519, have been acquired from Helm Leasing by Guilford's Maine Central to handle increased traffic. Newly delivered Nos.508 and 510 were in the consist of train RJED at Rotterdam Junction, New York on December 13, 2000.

IAN PLATT

New look for the SD70M

Union Pacific No.4635 is pictured on the GMDD test track in London, Ontario on December 1st. Five test units (UP 4635-'39) have been built with separate radiator cores for diesel engine jacket water and aftercoolers, in an effort to conform to new EPA Tier 1 emissions standards.

STEVEN J. BROWN

Amtrak Thanksgiving moves

Amtrak pressed some unusual equipment into service to handle its heavy Thanksgiving weekend passenger loads. Northbound *Hiawatha* train 337 from Chicago to Milwaukee had three leased MARC coaches in its consist at Northbrook, Illinois on November 24th (**left**). After their brief holiday stint on Amtrak, the MARC cars were sent to Cuyahoga Valley Scenic for Santa train service. On November 25th, Amtrak train 461 from Springfield, Massachusetts, to New Haven, Connecticut, crossed the Connecticut River at Enfield with three ConnDOT demotored SPV coaches in its consist (**below**).

ROBERT A. LAMAY

ROBERT JITTLER

New NICTD diesel

NICTD 1000 was recently obtained from National Railway Equipment. The rebuilt GP38 is shown on a ballast extra west of Ogden Dunes, Indiana, during a bridge replacement project on November 5th.

The Last

Logger

Article and photography by Martin E. Hansen

The Vancouver Island railroad of Canadian Forest Products is still going strong

IF YOUR SCANNER could pick up radio traffic from Vancouver Island, you'd hear chatter like this: "RTC to the 303, eh. We have 56 mtys at Camp A, 34 old, twelve new and ten longs, eh. Proceed to Siding Four to meet the 301 from Woss, drop yer mtys and take her loads directly to Beaver and call me when you git there, eh." No, you don't need to re-set your scanner, you've just tapped into a transmission from the last true logging railroad in North America, if not the world.

In this modern world of mega-mergers, it is increasingly difficult to find even short lines that retain the character of railroading in its heyday. Many of us were first attracted to railroads because of the down-home charm they had in the days before CTC, FREDs, and the like. If your railfanning has been reduced to taking pictures across chain-link fences and listening to local trains dispatched from Fort Worth, come along and discover true backwoods railroading on the Canadian Forest Products Limited (Canfor) Railroad.

Background

A fascinating railroad operating a mix of modern and historic equipment through spectacular scenery, together with some of the friendliest crews anywhere, await the intrepid railfan who visits Canfor. Located in the Nimpkish Valley on the northern tip of British Columbia's Vancouver Island is the Englewood Logging Division of Canadian Forest Products Ltd. Their huge timber holdings are referred to as the TFL-37 (Tree Farm License 37). This is a "working forest," as Canfor is responsible for forest management under the license. Canfor does not mill lumber from TFL-37, but cuts the timber on a pre-sold basis. The high quality of both old growth and second growth timber from these holdings keeps the demand for Canfor logs high, even in soft lumber markets.

The job of the Englewood Logging Division is to insure a steady supply of raw logs to the dry land re-sort at Beaver Cove at the northern end of Vancouver Island. At the heart of this operation is the Canfor logging railroad. While a few railroads in the United States still carry logs as one of their main commodities, Canfor is the last railroad devoted *exclusively* to the transportation of logs from the woods to the log dump, the very last of the backwoods logging lines that were once so common in the Pacific Northwest.

While Canfor as a company dates back to 1944, its roots reach back to the earliest logging on Vancouver Island. In 1917 the Nimpkish Timber Company was formed, and immediately began to build a railroad south from Beaver Cove. The original motive power was small Shay and Climax geared locomotives, a few of which survived after Canfor took over.

In 1924, Nimpkish Timber changed its name to Wood & English Logging and the railroad continued to expand

LEFT: **Early morning finds the Woss Camp train, headed by Caterpillar powered SW1200m No.301 in Canfor's new image paint, on the Groves Creek Bridge, bound for the Vernon reload. A distinctive Canfor caboose and a string of "mty" skeleton log cars trails along behind.** BELOW: **The Woss Camp train with No.301 and the Camp A train with unrebuilt SW1200s Nos.302 and 303 in the old color scheme swap trains at Siding Four. The tank cars are used in fire season to sprinkle the right of way with water to minimize the risk of a forest fire starting from stray brake shoe sparks.**

as the cutting areas receded from the coast. In 1926, Canadian Forest Products was formed when the nearby Beaver Cove Lumber & Pulp Company and its railroad were purchased by Wood & English. In 1944, the present owners of Canfor purchased the Canadian Forest Products / Wood & English holdings.

Early railroad operations were split in two by 14-mile-long Nimpkish Lake. Until 1957, the railroad delivered logs from the cutting areas to the south end of Nimpkish Lake, where they were rolled into the lake and made into log rafts. The rafts were towed to the north end of the lake, pulled out of the water, loaded back onto rail cars and taken the final twelve miles to Beaver Cove to be dumped into tidewater. Once in the Beaver Cove "pond," the logs were sorted and made into ocean-going log rafts which were towed to mills on the mainland. In 1954 construction began on the $2.5 million railroad line along the east shore of Nimpkish Lake, which eliminated the expensive, time consuming and sometimes dangerous rafting of logs. Construction was completed in 1957.

Motive power

Canfor inherited a variety of geared and rod-type steam power in 1944. For the next twelve years Canfor relied on steam locomotives. Several second-hand "lokies" (as logging locomotives are called at Canfor) were purchased in the 1940s and 1950s. The largest steam locomotive ever used on a Vancouver Island logging line came to Canfor in 1946, in the form of ex-Weyerhaeuser Timber 2-6-6-2 No.111. This big lokie lasted until 1961, when most, but not all, of Canfor's steam fleet was retired and scrapped. Steam held on at Canfor until the early 1970s in the form of Baldwin 2-6-2T No.112 and Alco 2-8-2 No.113.

In 1956, Canfor began to replace steam with diesels, as two SW1200 road switchers were purchased. These lokies (Nos.301 and 302) were ordered new from EMD, and came with dynamic brakes and over-sized fuel tanks, water tanks and larger air reservoirs to handle the steep grades. In 1959 a third identical SW1200, No.303, arrived. In 1972, when the Coos Bay Lumber Company in Oregon shut down its railroad, Canfor snapped up CBL No.1203, an EMD SW1200 identical to Canfor's other lokies. Renumbered 304, this was the final unit acquired by Canfor, and all four still operate daily.

By 1998, the four EMD lokies each had more than 30 years of service behind them. Purchasing and transporting new units to the island would be an expensive proposition, so the Nimpkish shops came up with a practical solution. Beginning in 1998, Nos.301 and 304 were re-engined with new 1500 h.p. Caterpillar prime movers. Also, the lokies had their cooling systems re-plumbed to face upward for more efficiency. Finally, larger mufflers were added. A new silver and red paint scheme adorns the re-powered lokies and the home-made cabooses that accompany them. No.303 entered the shops last November for her rebuild. No.302 is in good shape and will probably not be re-engined, but the more powerful rebuilt lokies will reduce her to stand-by service.

The railroad

Canfor's main line is 56 miles long. There are four log reloads along the line, where timber is transferred from big off-highway log trucks to waiting rail cars. The log trains keep the reloads stocked with empty log cars and pick up the loads for shipment to the dry-sort at Beaver Cove. The goal is to deliver at least 100 loaded cars to Beaver Cove each day — not a small task, given the many reloads, variations in production, and the terrain that must be traversed by the railroad year-'round — in all weather.

The base of rail and logging operations is the Woss logging camp, located at milepost 36.75. Mileposts begin at Beaver Cove, and end at the southernmost point, Vernon Reload (MP 56.4). The community of Woss was built by Canfor in 1948 to house loggers and railroad personnel. All the houses were company owned until just a few years ago, when Canfor began to let employees purchase some as private residences. The original enginehouse

was torn down in 1999, when operations were moved to a modern building on the east side of the yard.

Railroad operations are the responsibility of Mike Gaudet, Railway Supervisor. Mike has been with Canfor for 20 years and worked his way up through the ranks. He supervises over 40 employees who work full time as train crews, track crews, shop crews and dispatchers. Trains are dispatched by RTC (radio train control) dispatcher Ken Keeting. Ken's job is made even more interesting by the fact that many of the railroad's eight large trestles are planked to allow log trucks to use them between trains. Large signs posted at each end of the trestles warn truckers to "Call RTC before proceeding onto bridge." Given the 20 mile-per-hour speeds of the log trains and the blind curves on many bridge approaches, Ken reports that the truckers are *very* good about calling for clearance before venturing onto the trestles.

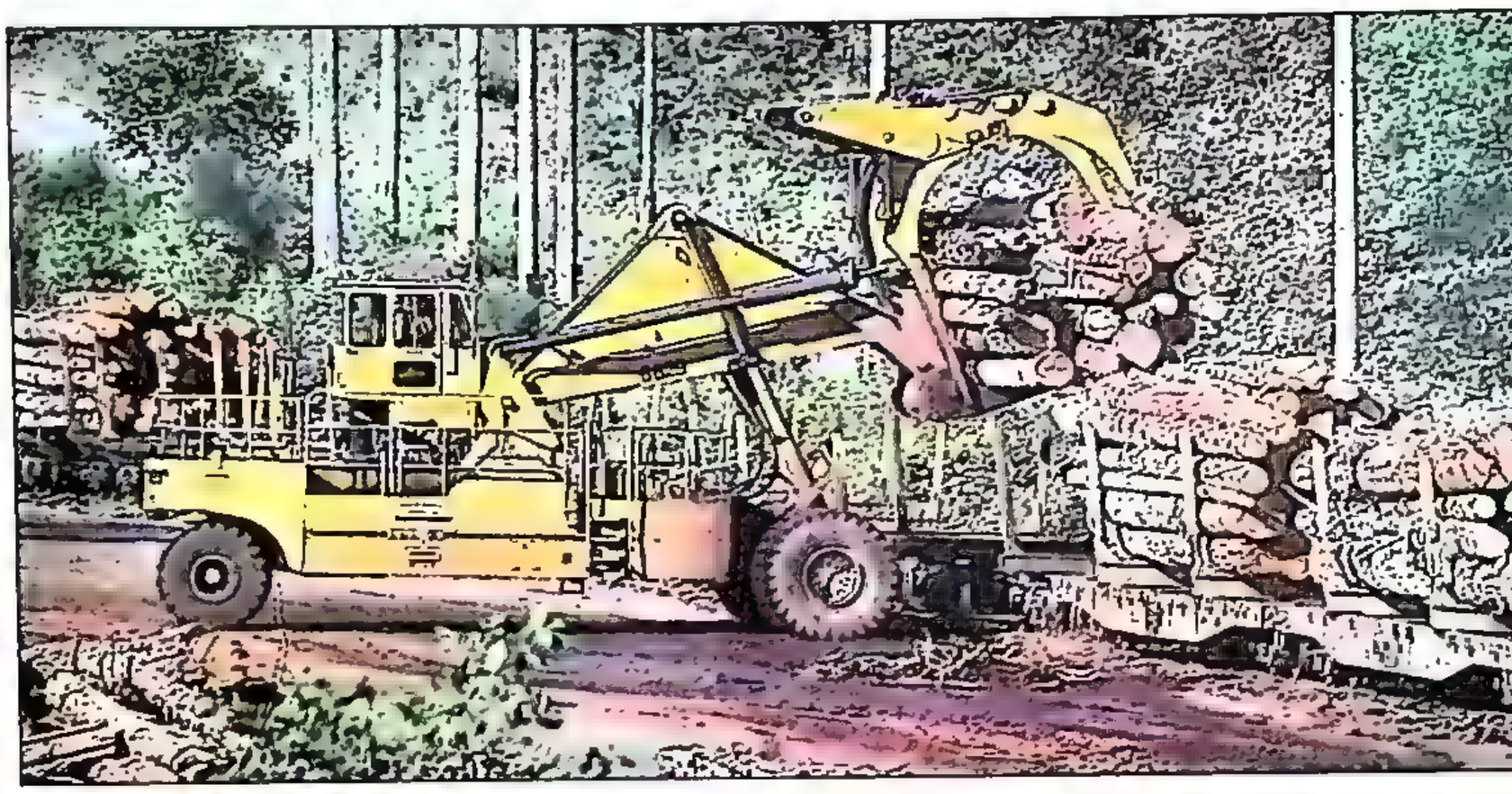
While there are mileposts, the most descriptive location markers are the hundreds of "curve markers." With 376 curves marked on the main line, it's quickly apparent what kind of construction was needed. Even with the rough terrain, the ruling grade was kept to 2.5%, with the most of the line at one percent or less.

The track has received considerable attention in recent years. Just ten years ago, all eight huge trestles were built entirely of logs and timbers. While impressive, they were fire hazards, and very costly to maintain. In the last decade all but three have been replaced with steel.

Mike Gaudet has a great series of photos he took the night the Gold Creek trestle caught fire. It was early afternoon a few years ago when a track crew was welding on the trestle in a heavy rain. Near the end of the day, a hot bolt head was cut off, and dropped into the darkness below. After searching in vain, the crew surmised the bolt must have fallen into the rushing waters of Gold Creek, so they knocked off for the day. About 45 minutes later Mike got a call from a logger asking if the railroad was burning something near the Gold Creek Trestle. By the time fire crews arrived, despite the driving rain, the top of the trestle was fully engulfed in flames. Fortunately, the fire was put out before the trestle was a total loss. An inspection the next day revealed that the top ties and stringers were severely scorched, but not totally destroyed. For the next several weeks, until full repairs could be made, log cars were pushed across the damaged trestle from one end so a lokie waiting on the other end could couple up and pull them off. This is true backwoods railroading!

One of the first trestles to be rebuilt was the one over the East Fork of the Kokish River. In 1994 a huge slide wiped out the timber bents, leaving 250 feet of rail and ties hanging in mid-air. Mike Gaudet, then Track Supervisor, had the job of walking over the "track" hanging in midair to hang tape on the far side to prevent anyone from trying to cross. The trip across the suspended track went fine until Mike reached the middle of the sag. Then a logging helicopter pilot (very

OPPOSITE: **The Camp A job has dropped its loads at Beaver Cove Yard and is pumping up the brakes on another train of southbound empties for the woods .** RIGHT: **The Beaver Cove dry sort uses large mechanized unloaders.** BELOW: **At Woss reload, an entire truckload of timber from the woods is transferred to the train at once using a sling suspended from an A-frame.**



ABOVE: **Nos.303 and 302 thread Half Way Island cut with a train of mtys heading back to the woods from Beaver Cove. Every fifth tie is steel.** OPPOSITE TOP: **Loads for Beaver Cove cross the wood timbers of Steel Creek trestle and** OPPOSITE BOTTOM: **the new steel East Fork trestle over the Kokish River.**

common "up-Island") decided to go down for a closer look. When the chopper got about 75 feet over Mike's head, the rotor wash made the hanging track undulate like the back of a bucking horse. Mike's clenched, shaking fist told the chopper pilot to clear out. It took several minutes (Mike says it seemed much longer) for the track to stop swaying so he could complete his trip across.

While Canfor is known for its many tall and spectacular trestles, the railroad now boasts a huge rock cut that would impress most main line engineering departments. In 1996, the huge Half Way Island trestle needed replacement. Rather than simply replacing the wood structure with a steel trestle, the bridge was bypassed entirely with the relocation of the railroad through a 700-foot-long rock cut. Construction took nearly a year, but the railroad was able to eliminate a high-maintenance trestle and several curves on the north end of the line.

Vancouver Island is known for its substantial rainfall, but the summers produce some hot and dry weather. The fire season is fairly short, but precautions are still taken. When the temperature is over 75 degrees (warm for up-Island, eh?) for a number of days, woods logging may be shut down. This rarely affects the railroad, as there are still cold decks (piles of previously cut and stacked logs in the woods) that can be used to keep the trains running to Beaver Cove. In summer, all trains have tank cars behind the engines to water the right-of-way to reduce fires from brake shoe sparks. The tank cars are filled from the old water towers that remain from the days of steam. Woss Camp receives about five feet of snow in an average winter. However, in the winter of 1998-1999 nearly 25 feet of snow fell in short order, literally burying most of the equipment out in the woods.

In addition to trestle work, the track is constantly upgraded. The standard ties are untreated cedar, which last over 20 years, are available locally, and don't pose the environmental problems that treated ties would. Of the approximately 10,000 ties replaced each year, 1000 are steel. Every fifth tie on curves has been replaced with steel, and more are being added each year. The ballast is a heavy mix of limestone and other rock that provides a very stable roadbed.

Operations

Two crews are on duty every morning, with a third working at night. One crew reports at Woss camp, and the other checks in at Camp A reload. The Woss Camp crew handles trains over the south end going to the Woss, McQuilla and Vernon reloads. The Woss crew keeps the three reloads stocked with empty log cars ("mtys" as the crews call them) and takes the loads to Siding Four or Siding Six to be handed off to the Camp A crew.

The Camp A crews are responsible for keeping the Camp A reload stocked with mtys and taking loads down to the dry land re-sort at Beaver Cove. The third crew makes two night trips to Beaver Cove from Camp A.

A typical workday begins at 6:30 a.m. The Woss Camp crew reports in at the main railroad office and leaves town with the lokie that they spotted in the yard the night before. They leave at 7:00 a.m. as a light engine (or, in summer, with a water car that sprinkles the right-of-way to suppress fires). The crew usually proceeds to Siding Six where they dropped their loaded train and caboose the night before. The loaded train proceeds north ("up-Island," eh) to Siding Four, where they meet the Camp A train that also left at 7:00 am. The Camp A train has empty cars that had been picked up by the night trains from Beaver Cove.

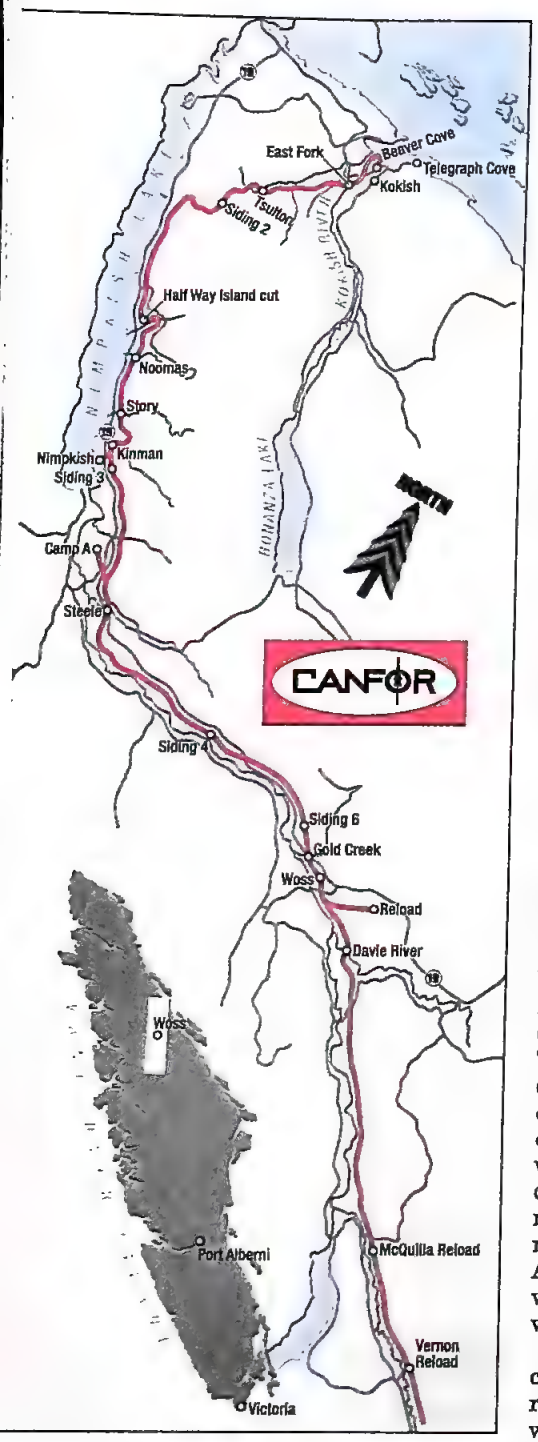
From Siding Four, the Woss Camp train takes the empties south to the re-loads at McQuilla and Vernon. The crew first services the southernmost reload, at Vernon Lake. Here the lokie shoves the empty cars uphill past the re-load onto the top end of the re-load spur for loading. The lokie then picks up the caboose, runs past the re-load to the bottom end and pulls out the loaded cars. Once the loads are pulled, the caboose is dropped by gravity onto the rear end. On the way north, the train is cut off and tied down on the main while the lokie works the McQuilla reload. Once the train is reassembled, the crew takes the loads up to Siding Four, where they meet the Camp A train that has returned from the run to Beaver Cove and back. The

trains exchange loads and mtys, and the Woss Camp train takes the mtys to the Woss reload, only a few miles from camp. Here the empties are dropped, and the loads made up into a train which is taken back north through Woss Camp and up to Siding Six, where it is tied down for the night. The crew then runs light engine back to Woss Camp and ties up.

The Camp A train takes its morning train of empties south for the 8:00 a.m. meet at Siding Four with the Woss Camp train as described above. From Siding Four, the train returns to Camp A and picks up the additional loads that were made up early in the morning. This fully loaded train then proceeds north 23 miles to Beaver Cove, where the loaded cars are spotted in the yard and unloaded as time permits. The lokies take on fuel, couple to their train of mtys, and return to Camp A, where they drop off some mtys at the reload. The rest of the mtys are taken south to Siding Four for the exchange with the Woss Camp train. The Camp A train then goes back to Camp A, and ties its train down on the main. The crew drops the lokies at the reload and heads home. At 4:00 p.m., the night train crew reports at Camp A and spends the evening making two trips to Beaver Cove and back, delivering loads and picking up mtys for the next day.

Train crews encounter a wide variety of wildlife on the upper Island every day. A black bear greets the Woss Camp crew on each trip south at the Davies Road crossing. As the train approaches, the bear goes out to a log lying about 50 yards from the track and leans on it with his front two paws. He studies the lokie and each car as it passes. When the caboose goes by, he raises his right paw and then heads back to the woods. It's all the caboose crew can do not to wave back to the bear, who seems to be performing a classic roll-by inspection.

Besides the constant activity of the log trains, there are at least two track crews on duty at all times. The track crews use a mixture of vintage logging speeders and up-to-date tampers. The yellow track crew speeders date to the 1930s, and were typical on all northwest logging railroads. The



speeders and gang cars are kept in good repair with the other Canfor railroad equipment at Nimpkish .

Nimpkish Shops

The Nimpkish shops date back to the 1940s. At one time located on the main line, today the shops are situated on a spur north of Camp A. Here, all repairs are performed on the 400 log cars, four EMD lokies and other track and work cars. While the shops feature state-of-the-art equipment, much from the days of steam is still on hand. In the back of the second car shop is a complete operational coal-fired forge with all the necessary tools and instruments. The shops also repair large non-railroad logging equipment.

The lokies and cars may be somewhat dated, but they are kept in excellent shape. The shops have a reputation for ingenuity that stretches back for decades. Since all new railroad equipment must be barged up to Beaver Cove from the mainland, great care is taken to make existing equipment last. In the late 1950s, a two-truck Shay and a two-truck Climax that had bad boilers were converted to diesels. This unique pair was used until 1973.

There are now over 400 log cars in service on the Canfor railroad, all with roller bearings. The wooden cars were long ago replaced with a fleet of 45-foot steel cars. With the 1991 shutdown of Weyerhaeuser Timber Company's Sycan logging line in Oregon, and the end of log hauling at Longview, Washington, over 100 53-foot WTCo cars have been added to the Canfor fleet in the last few years. In addition, there are 65 "boom stick" (skeleton) cars that are used to haul the long logs that make up the perimeter of the log rafts at the Beaver Cove dump.

Canfor steam lives

Steam still has as toehold at Canfor. On display at Beaver Cove is the 80-ton Baldwin 2-6-2T last used as the Woss relief lokie. On display for nearly 20 years, she is still complete and could run again. Canfor's real steam "jewel" is No.113, a 120-ton Alco 2-8-2 originally built for Spokane, Portland & Seattle subsidiary Portland, Astoria & Pacific out of Banks, Oregon. No.113 was purchased by Canfor in 1953 and continued in standby service into 1976, making her the last steam lokie in regular logging service in the west. After that, she was stored at Woss, and was occasionally fired up. By 1977 she was retired.

As part of Canfor's 50th anniversary celebrations in 1988, No.113 was fully restored by the shop at Nimpkish and was used for the next several summers. At that time, the environmental movement was strong, and Canfor wanted to show the care they were taking in preserving the forest in TFL-37. No.113 was used with a passenger car (named the *Grey Ghost*) to take school kids and visitors up to the cutting areas to see how Canfor was re-seeding the forests. No.113's crews consisted of Canfor's last two steam engineers and young Mike Gaudet and Larry Knutson. (A local boy — Larry refers to Woss as the "big city" — he's the engineer on the Woss Camp train.) In 1995, the last of the old Canfor steam crews retired, and No.113 awaits a new crew.

The future

The future of the Canfor railroad is very bright. Even though other logging lines have succumbed to the lower costs of truck hauling, Canfor's situation is different. The Beaver Cove dry-sort is a modern, efficient facility, but it fills all the available land. Since log trucks need to be quickly unloaded for the trip back to the woods, delivery of logs by rail is necessary for Beaver Cove's smooth operation. After the railroad drops off 35-50 cars, the re-sort crews have several hours to unload the cars before the next train arrives. This gives the dry-sort crews the flexibility to unload log trucks immediately as they come in, and then go back to the log train as time permits. If all the loads came in by truck, the sort yard could not handle the volume in one day. Also, the railroad can deliver logs at night, letting the dry-sort run 24 hours a day.

The railroad provides a substantial savings in fuel costs compared to the trucks that would be needed to haul the same number of logs to Beaver Cove. Further, the use of log trucks on the steep terrain found in the north Island, with its many rivers and streams, poses an environmental risk in case of a fuel spill. With each train taking 50 or more truckloads of logs to Beaver Cove, these risks are greatly reduced. In 1999, the railroad hauled over 23,000 loads of logs!

A mining company is exploring opening a limestone quarry along the railroad north of Woss Camp. If this comes about, the railroad may be used to haul rock trains to barges at Beaver Cove. The remaining unrebuilt EMD (No.302) would be used for this run. Until then, the exclusive task of Mike Gaudet and the Canfor crews is to take loads to the re-sort at Beaver Cove and emtys back to the re-loads.

The tradition of logging with railroads dates back more than 100 years. In the year 2001, decades after all other true logging railroads have been abandoned, the railroad remains the most practical and efficient way for Canfor to take its timber to market.

For the curious, the radio chatter at the beginning of this piece translates as follows: "Radio train control to engineer on No.303. We have 56 empty log cars on the siding at Camp A. 34 of the cars are 45 feet long, twelve are 53-foot cars, and the last ten are boom stick cars. Take your train to Siding Four to meet the northbound with No.301, and exchange your train of empties for their train of loads. Then take your train north directly to the dry-sort yard at Beaver Cove and radio back to me when you arrive."

I like the way they say it better — eh. And I do wish my scanner could pick up the chatter from Woss Camp.

Railfanning the Canfor railroad

HAVING EXPERIENCED a trip to Canfor, I can honestly say it's not as hard as it looks. As many of you may know, I am an avid logging railroad fan. Even so, I had put off making a trip to Canfor on the mistaken belief that the railroad was simply too far away and remote to be properly photographed. Not true! Read along and learn just how easy the trip can be.

Vancouver Island is only accessible by ferries from the mainland. The most frequent boats leave from Port Angeles and Seattle, Washington, and from Horseshoe Bay, north of Vancouver, British Columbia. Ferries from Horseshoe Bay and Port Angeles take about an hour and a half and cost about $35.00 for a car and two passengers. You should call ahead to check the schedule; many ferries sail each day, but in the summer you may have to wait an hour or two. The ferries provide great views of the small islands surrounding the mainland and Vancouver Island.

On your way up to Canfor, visit the RailAmerica yard in Nanaimo and get a good look at their power. Steam logging locomotives are on display in several small towns along the highway leading north. Most are covered, but they are well worth seeing. A short side trip inland to Port Alberni is recommended if you're going "up-Island" in the summer. Here the Port of Port Alberni has restored Alberni Pacific Lumber Company No.7, a 1929 Baldwin 2-8-2T which ran on a number of Vancouver Island logging lines until 1970. She steams on summer weekends.

Now, on to Canfor. Until ten years ago, the road north from Campbell River was gravel, and this alone discouraged many would-be visitors. The road is now paved all the way to Port Hardy. It's a good two-lane highway, but Vancouver Island is very big, so allow a solid day to drive from your ferry slip to Canfor. An extra day enroute gives you plenty of time to visit some of the sights along the way.

Campbell River is the last town of any size before you reach Woss Camp (population 500), so you should get your last gas and food there. In Woss there is a gas station, mini store, café and (my personal favorite) the Lucky Lager Pub. In the last three years, a motel has been built next to the pub. The motel is small (about ten rooms) but very nice and clean and affordable. Call ahead for reservations, since many helicopter crews stay at the motel in the summer.

If you like to camp out, there is a great campground at nearby Woss Lake that is free and quite beautiful. A caution to campers: the Woss region has a healthy black bear population. Don't leave food out at night at your campsite.

When you arrive at Woss Camp, check in with Mike Gaudet, Canfor's Railway Supervisor. His office is in the railway headquarters building on the east side of the small yard. Mike and dispatcher Ken Keeting are very friendly and glad to welcome visitors to their unique railroad. They will tell you the operating schedule for the days of your visit. They are also good about giving directions to some of the best photos spots, such as the trestles and the big new Halfway Island rock cut. If you're interested, a cab ride on a log train can be arranged through Mike.

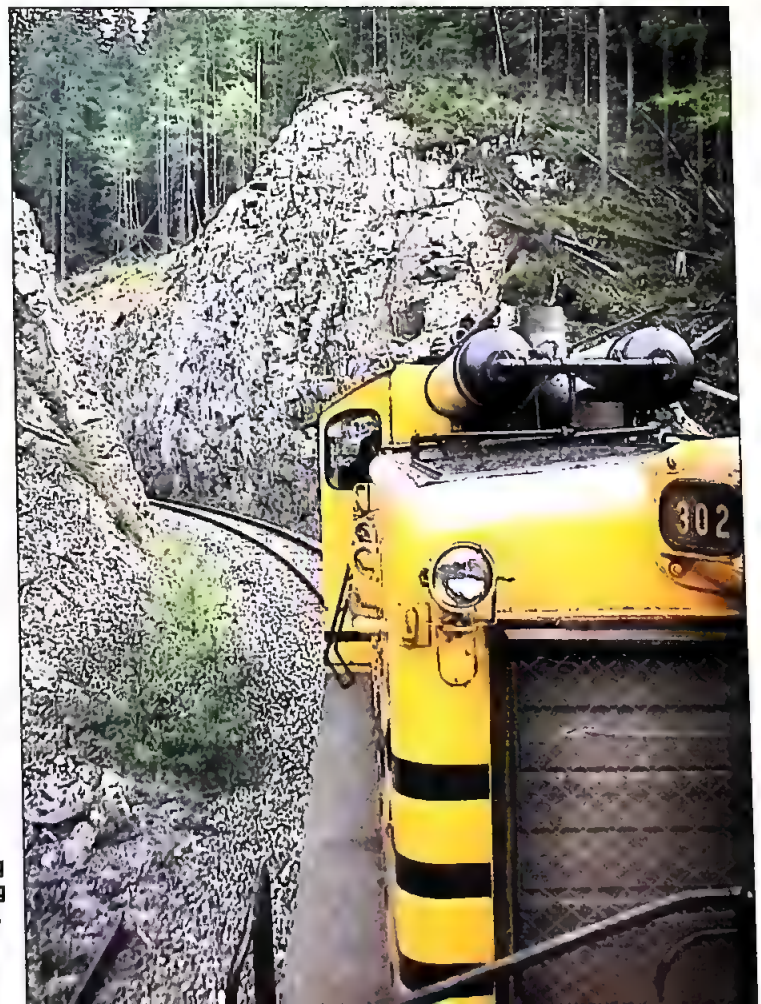
The road north of Woss parallels the railroad for several miles, although lush foliage hides the railroad from view. The highway offers easy access to all but two of the big trestles. You need not drive across the trestles, since they all have walkways with railings. Plan your shots to take advantage of the sun, as some trestles are shaded by trees until mid-morning.

The re-loads are all readily accessible by gravel roads. You can use a car to railfan Canfor, but a truck may give you a little more ground clearance on a few of what Mike Gaudet calls "our less traveled roads." Keep an eye out for log trucks on the roads to the re-loads. The roads are wide and visibility is good, but be careful anyway.

A scanner is very helpful, since there is plenty of radio talk from the crews. Their good nature was apparent one morning while we were following the Woss Camp train south to Vernon reload. Over the radio someone played a short verse from the song "When in Doubt — Take the Southbound Train." Despite plenty of smiles from the crew, no one confessed to the transmission. Radio frequencies are 160.650 and 165.540.

Go prepared for rain and cold weather. The best time to visit is during July and August, when the chance of having clear, warm weather is best. In the summer, the days are quite long on the north end of the Island, and you can shoot the night trains until about 9:00 p.m.

In summary, a railfan trip to Canfor is simply a must for anyone who wants to experience big-time backwoods railroading. The scenery is spectacular, and the warmth and hospitality of the crews makes the trip an event that just should not be missed. In only a few days, with a little care, you will head home with a camera bag full of great photographs of a truly unique railroad. "See ya up-Island, eh?" — *MARTIN E. HANSEN*



Seen from the second unit, a Beaver Cove log train heads into the big cut at Half Way Island.

Northern Lines Dash-9s

by
Bruce Kelly

BNSF couldn't leave well enough alone

I CAN STILL REMEMBER that particular afternoon during my final year as associate editor of R&R. Jim Boyd walked into the office, commenting about a write-up in the latest issue of *CTC Board* magazine, in which editor Dale Sanders lamented the recent rash of ugly paint schemes that had been devised by various railroads. Jim declared, "Magazine editors aren't qualified to preach to the railroads about their paint schemes." "Well," I replied, "Dale does hold a Bachelor of Arts degree in Visual Communication." Within a few days, Jim himself was being quoted in a *Wall Street Journal* story on the topic of — you guessed it — railroad paint schemes. While Dale's editorial introduced a valid argument on the vanishing art of creating corporate image, Jim's words in the Journal brought the subject to a much wider audience, including the very heads of business who needed to hear it most.

If this growing debate over locomotive liveries could be traced back to a single point of origin, it would have to be Burlington Northern & Santa Fe SD70MAC 9647. The BNSF merger hadn't even been approved, but BN and Santa Fe officials were eager to publicize some kind of new look. While the dark green and cream colors were taken from BN's existing SD70MAC scheme, everything else was done Santa Fe style, from the "warbonnet" color pattern and Cooper Black lettering right down to the oval "cigar band" nose emblem. The results were horrific (page 4, November 1995 R&R). Immediately, the 9647 was being referred to as either the "Barfbonnet" or the "Warvomit." BN officials quickly backpedaled, announcing that the color scheme was not necessarily the final plan but simply a way of commemorating the forthcoming merger.

Three months after the debut of the ugly duckling diesel, I announced my plans to leave R&R and move back to the Pacific Northwest. But, the thought of Barfbonnets dominating the scene had me wondering if I really wanted to relocate to the heart of BN country. They couldn't possibly go through with implementing that terrible paint scheme, could they?

My prayers were answered on the rainy afternoon of May 28, 1996, when BN train No.3 departed Spokane, Washington, bound for Seattle. Coupled into the middle of

ABOVE: **Two BNSF Dash 9-44CW's outclass a green Burlington Northern SD40-2 as they lead a westbound intermodal train across Sand Creek, approaching Sandpoint, Idaho, on October 19, 1997.** LEFT: **Deep in the "Pumpkin patch" a Dash 9 idles on the head end of grain train G23GA at Hauser Yard, Idaho, on November 12, 1996.**

the power consist was SD60M 9297, making its maiden voyage west in a new orange and dark green scheme. After its faux pas with the 9647, BNSF took a more refined approach with the 9297 and toured the unit across the BN and Santa Fe systems to solicit employee comments on the two slightly varied treatments applied to either side. The left side utilized three parallel red pinstripes to separate the green and orange, while the right side featured a wider, single red pinstripe.

Two months later, in July 1996, the end product arrived from General Electric on BNSF's new Dash 9-44CWs. Instead of the red pinstripes and nose emblem lettering of SD60M 9297, the Dash 9s wore highly reflective Scotchlite yellow pinstripes and nose lettering, but the overall green and orange look remained pretty much the same. For the first time in a long, long while, a railroad had developed a new paint scheme that actually worked. What would officially become known as BNSF's "Northern Lines" livery was, for the most part, a modernized version of the Great Northern livery that was applied in the late 1940s and early '50s. Some were quick to argue that the BNSF green was closer to NP's dark green, but side-by-side comparisons in books and magazines left no doubt that the Northern Lines look was truly inspired by the GN. So it was appropriate that I witnessed my first Dash 9s up close and personal on the former GN main line over Marias Pass (March 1997 R&R). Even without bearing the likeness of GN's mountain goat mascot "Rocky," the Dash 9s earned the nickname "Goat Boats" for their obvious similarity to GN diesels of yesteryear. But it was the most unlikely nickname of all — "Pumpkins" — that ultimately became a regular part of BNSF jargon among crews, dispatchers, and yard masters.

ABOVE: **The morning after the Inland Northwest's devastating Ice Storm of '96, three Dash 9s (and one Santa Fe infiltrator) prepare to depart Hauser Yard with the 1st 207 on November 20, 1996. Sailing by on the main line are containers on train 21.** BELOW: **Goat boats heading west and east — at 4:43 p.m. on October 14, 1997, three Dash 9s lead grain train GSIOINB (Sioux City, Iowa, to Seattle's Interbay Yard) out of Spokane on the Latah Creek Bridge, starting to climb to Marshall Canyon. In the background, two more Dash 9s are holding at Empire siding, awaiting their turn to enter the city with eastbound grain empties.**

BNSF's Dash 9s introduced more than just a well-conceived paint scheme. They marked the full-production debut of a new GE "HiAd" truck that gave the units a truly modern appearance. It was soon discovered that the new trucks tended to vibrate at certain speeds, but the problem was quickly resolved by the installation of yaw dampers.

During the winter of 1996-'97, more and more of the big GEs entered service, allowing BNSF to put many of them on the point of intermodal and manifest trains, rather than

confining them to unit grain trains as was originally intended. By the spring of 1997, a number of the Dash 9s finally began their intended use as Distributed Power Units on grain trains, with Dash 9s on the hind end being remotely controlled from the head end. Early configurations called for two Dash 9s on the front and two DPU mates on the rear, or three up front and one on the rear. Upon reaching Hauser Yard in northern Idaho or Yardley Yard in Spokane, these trains typically reduced to three units (all up front, or two forward and one aft) for the final leg to the West Coast ports. Two lead units and two rear-end remotes is now the norm for westbound grain loads using DPUs.

Back to the winter of '96-'97. Traffic during that period began to get so heavy on BNSF's Northwest routes that there was rarely time to run the Dash 9s through the wash rack. As a result, many of them were allowed to gather dirt and grime to the point that the brilliant orange of the Northern Lines livery looked more like mud. Some fans quipped that Santa Fe's red and silver warbonnet scheme — which was applied to SD75M's and certain batches of Dash 9s as BNSF's "Southern Lines" livery — held up to weathering better than the green and orange. I think those people were speaking from experience with the Santa Fe double track main line across the Southwest, where conditions are generally drier and tunnels are few and far between. Here in the Northwest, I've seen plenty of red and silver Dash 9s looking downright shabby after their exhaust had been repeatedly blown back against that rain-soaked warbonnet inside the dozens of tunnels that stretch from Montana to the Pacific Coast.

In an attempt to brighten things up, BNSF introduced a modified version of the Northern Lines livery in mid-1997 (page 3, December 1997 R&R). By then, the Northern Lines scheme had become known as the "Heritage" scheme, thus the newer color mix was called "Heritage II" or "Premium Heritage." It replaced the previous green hood lettering and circular nose emblem with yellow lettering and a yellow cigar

ABOVE: **Having conquered the distant snow-capped Cascade Mountains at Stampede Pass, Auburn-to-Spokane empty grain train XAUBSPO accelerates out of Cle Elum, Washington, on May 13, 1997. Note how the Pumpkin on the point stands out better against the green landscape than the BN units immediately behind.** BELOW: **Proving that the Northern Lines/Heritage I paint scheme works equally well on older conventional cab units, SD40-2 7335 awaits departure from Hauser Yard with a westbound grain train on April 2, 2000. The unit is among 40 ex-Canadian National and Grand Trunk Western SD40s that were rebuilt to Dash 2 standards, painted in Northern Lines livery and leased to BNSF beginning in 1999.**

band nose emblem, and also expanded the use of orange paint and changed the single yellow Scotchlite pinstripe into triple yellow stripes. Heritage II was first applied to a set of existing Dash 9s by a contract shop in 1997; new Dash 9s wearing Heritage II began arriving from GE in early 1998.

That original Dash 9 image was something that could have led BNSF into the 21st century. The Heritage II look, however, takes BNSF back 30 years to an era of overdone pinstripes and gaudy color combinations. It's a demonstration of retro-styling gone wrong. What's worse, it weathers terribly. Run a pair of Dash 9s from Minneapolis to Seattle in the dead of winter, one of them in Heritage I paint and the other in Heritage II, and it'll be the Heritage II model that completes the trip looking filthier. When they're clean, the Heritage II triple yellow pinstripes and yellow hood lettering may enhance visibility somewhat, but when they're dirty, those stripes will peek through in the few spots that aren't totally caked in grime, announcing loud and clear that "this is one grubby diesel."

Alas, Heritage II replaced Heritage I as the standard for Dash 9s and other new supercabs delivered since 1998. The Heritage I/Northern Lines scheme wasn't completely abandoned, though. This simpler scheme is less expensive to apply, therefore it gets applied to older conventional cab units after they undergo collision repair or other major shop work. The narrow noses of conventional cab units are well-suited for the Heritage I circular BNSF logo, but they'd look a bit overwhelmed wearing the Heritage II cigar band emblem. I guess that's further testimony in favor of the Northern Lines look; it was designed for today's supercabs, but it also fits perfectly on SD40-2s, SD9s, GP30s, C30-7s, SW12s and everything else. Unlike conventional cab rebuilds, supercabs that get shopped are supposed to be repainted in Heritage II. However, at least one supercab was inadvertently repainted in Heritage I, that being SD60M 9277.

In addition to replacing Heritage I as BNSF's primary look, Heritage II has apparently brought an end to the former Santa Fe/Super Fleet warbonnet scheme. None of the recent Dash 9 deliveries featured red and silver paint, and a couple of former Super Fleet units that underwent repair got a fresh coat of Heritage II paint.

Meanwhile, those 164 Northern Lines Dash 9s are still out there. From my home west of Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, I can see and hear them across the valley on BNSF's busy Spokane-to-Sandpoint "Funnel." Late at night, when all else is quiet, I can lie in bed and listen to that distant chug-chug-chug as a set of Dash 9s pull more than 100 loads of grain out of nearby Hauser Yard, or when they march east on the 0.4% grade out of Washington with a heavy stack train. And there's that K-3 air horn, emitting a soulful, melodic sound that quills up and down as sweet as any steam whistle.

To me, BNSF's first Dash 9s were a case of "if it ain't broke, don't fix it . . . just keep it clean!" Cascade green units have plied the rails for 30 years, including the past four years since BN became BNSF. I think that on the merits of its simple good looks, the Northern Lines livery will survive another 30 years as well.

ABOVE: **One snow squall has just passed and another is fast approaching (note the flakes flying in the air) as Dash 9s 963 and 1018, accompanied by Santa Fe 5183, prepare to depart Hauser Yard with grain train G236A on November 4, 1996.** BELOW: **Having held the main at Athol, Idaho, to let train No.4 duck into the clear, Dash 9s 1057 and 1085 get train No.1 moving again at 3:27 p.m. on January 14, 1997.**

The Clearfield Chronicles

R.J. Corman hauls coal in the Pennsylvania mountains

by James A. Bacon

PHOTOGRAPHY BY JAMES A. BACON, EXCEPT AS NOTED

I AM STANDING alongside one of the last remaining segments of what was once the Beech Creek Railroad, near the Route 322 crossing just east of Clearfield, Pennsylvania. A light south breeze carries the distant whine of drifting GP38s, approaching from beyond the abandoned PRR bridge to my left. The train, headed by five ex-Conrail units now in the employ of R.J. Corman Railroad's Pennsylvania Lines (RJCP), ducks under the old bridge and crawls toward me on heavy welded rail. Engineer Dave Maines deftly stops the 13,000 ton PPLX unit coal train within two feet of my position. Climbing aboard, I introduce myself to Dave and conductor George Kline, who offers me the left-hand seat.

Through the good graces of vice president Gary Pettingil and trainmaster Tim Potts, I will spend the next 16 hours observing operations on the east end of what used to be Conrail's "Clearfield Cluster," an assemblage of 250 miles of former Pennsylvania Railroad and New York Central coal branches, centered on Clearfield County, Pennsylvania. In late 1995, R.J. Corman Corporation of Nicholasville, Kentucky concluded negotiations to purchase the Clearfield Cluster, assuming operations at 11:59 p.m., December 29, 1995.

Radioing the yard office that the "passenger" is on board, Dave kicks off the air and we begin rolling at 4:30 p.m. Crossing the busy highway, we proceed around the east leg of the wye onto the "WBV," the old West Branch Valley Railroad, which follows the West Branch of the Susquehanna River 52 miles to Keating, the present interchange point with Conrail. Just past the wye, we cross the river on a stout deck plate girder bridge and proceed to Fulton Tunnel, which avoids a long bend in the river. Dave holds our speed to 10 miles per hour through the 2800-foot natural-rock bore, the slow order due to a couple of soft spots inside. We glide out the other end, recross the river, and duck under I-80.

As soon as all 99 cars are clear of the slow order, the old girls are notched out to bring us up to 25 m.p.h., track speed on the WBV. The EMD power of 10,000 horses echoes back off the hillsides and flanges squeal on the many sharp curves. At milepost 7, GPU's Shawville Generating Plant comes into view. This plant no longer receives fuel from the railroad, the short haul from nearby mines being handled by trucks. Crossing the river one last time, we slow for the narrow confines of Shawville Tunnel. Conrail relined the ancient bore several years ago with a galvanized steel and concrete liner resembling a large culvert, and as we pass through, I notice the wall is barely two feet outside my window. Clearing the east portal, we power up again, resuming track speed.

ABOVE: **Four R.J. Corman GP-38s roll 105 PPLX empties west around the point at Mowry, Pennsylvania, on the former West Branch Valley Railroad. Rolling Stone Road provides an excellent vantage point to watch the action in both directions from high overhead. BELOW: An empty 105-car PPLX train heads down the connector off the old New York Central to the former Pennsylvania Railroad line to Punxsutawny. Construction of this track in 1980 allowed abandonment of the ex-Pennsy line from Mahaffey and points south, allowing coal off branch to travel east to Clearfield. The line no longer extends beyond Hillman, location of P&N Coal's loadout. The track in the foreground continues on to Cherry Tree and Clymer.**

Although we are on a .2% descending grade, it takes about three notches on the throttle to maintain a steady pace due to the frequent curves.

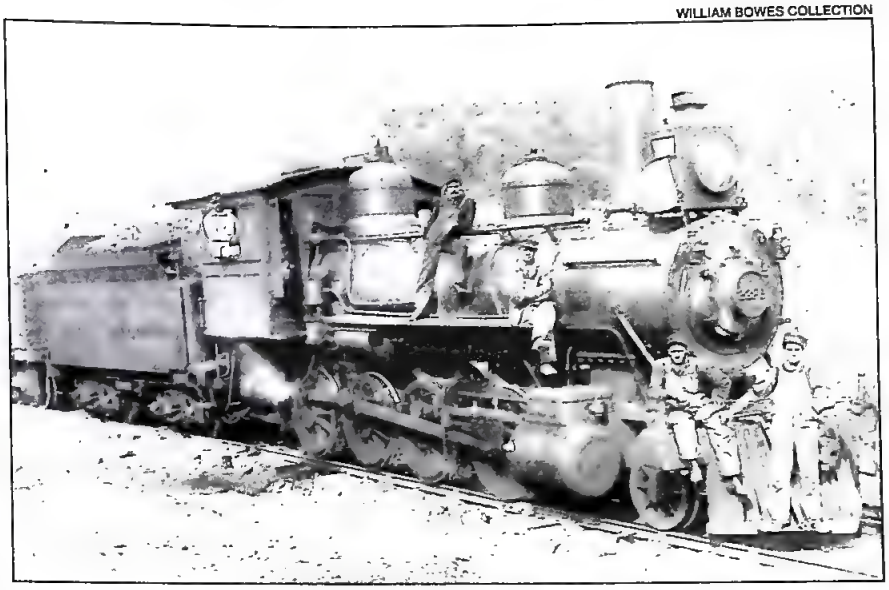
As we twist and turn along the river, I am struck by the beauty of this valley. It reminds me of the New River Gorge in West Virginia, but more compact in width and depth. Like the New, few indications of civilization are visible, except for the occasional house or cabin and the ruins of abandoned coal loaders. Indeed, a cursory inspection of a standard highway map will reveal that this part of Pennsylvania is nearly devoid of roads.

After passing through Deer Creek and Karthaus tunnels, we meet three of RJCP's red-and-silver GP16s on the siding. We pass the light engines and slow to a stop at the Route 879 crossing, in "downtown" Karthaus. We are going to set out a car that has a mangled foot stirrup; the GP16s, off a previous train, will return it to Clearfield Yard to be repaired. We cut the train, pull ahead and, as George throws the switch, Dave and I spy a large porcupine climbing a tree, barely 20 feet from my window. The GPs rev up as they shove back on 35 loads into the siding; the porky doesn't care. After dropping our bad-order car, we reassemble our train and then tie it down on the main, as this crew, which spent all day loading at Bradford Coal Company's Bigler Refinery, is about to expire on the 12-hour law.

We pile into the waiting crew van, then head back to Clearfield to pick up a fresh crew. At the yard office, I meet our new conductor, Kerry Noel. Tim Potts, trainmaster, will serve as our engineer. Second-trick dispatcher Gene Shaddock hands Mr. Noel our orders, which state we are to deliver our 99 loads to Keating, pick up 136 empties and four loads from Conrail, drop the four loads and 32 empties back here at the yard, then deliver the remainder to Leslie Tipple, 24 miles out the Wallaceton Secondary. There we will be relieved by tomorrow's first crew, which will load the train.

As we head for the crew van, Tim explains we will likely be at it all night, especially if Conrail isn't on time with our empties, which is likely. Darkness is falling as we make the half-hour trip back to our train, and I think about the long history of the region; why the railroad is here, and how it was built. It is a very interesting story . . .

WILLIAM BOWES COLLECTION



ABOVE: **New York Central 2-8-0 No.2286 poses with her crew near Viaduct on the original Beech Creek line down the mountain. These Consolidations, plus 32 4-8-0s of similar design, were the primary power on NYC routes for the first forty years of operations in the Clearfield region.** BELOW: **The Pennsylvania Railroad also tapped the coal region. PRR Consolidations shove a train around Big Fill on the Tyrone line up Sandy Ridge, circa 1890.**

Lay o' the Land

Clearfield County is located in central Pennsylvania, in the northeast corner of the vast soft-coal producing region of the Appalachian Plateau, the eastern boundary of which forms the main Appalachian Ridge. While most eastern railroads must climb over this barrier, 60-some miles north of Altoona at Lock Haven, the West Branch of the Susquehanna River penetrates the plateau, effectively pushing the eastern continental divide far to the west, in turn providing a water-level route out of Clearfield County to the east. Tributary streams allowed reasonable grades to the north from Williamsport, and the proximity of the valley's upper extremities to Cresson enabled coal to easily travel west on the former PRR. It is essentially downhill in any direction from mine to market, a circumstance that has helped make Clearfield coal highly competitive over the last century. On the downside, the coal deposits tend toward a higher sulphur content than those farther south, more of an issue as time marches on.

Enter the Pennsy and Central

Barely had the main line of the PRR been completed across Pennsylvania when plans

PHILIPSBURG HISTORICAL SOCIETY COLLECTION

were being laid to tap the rich timber and coal reserves of the Clearfield area. Locally sponsored lines built into the area from Tyrone and Bellwood, just east of Altoona, having to go up and over Sandy Ridge on tortuous grades approaching three percent. Before these lines were finished, the PRR became involved by advancing financial help, and ultimately took over total control.

These initial PRR branches blanketed the upper Moshannon Creek watershed, encompassing the area around and south of Philipsburg, with the line from Tyrone finally reaching Clearfield by 1869. Tiny class R (H-3) 2-8-0s pulled and pushed coal and timber over Sandy Ridge, four being required for the typical 50-car trains. By the late 1880s, the PRR had extended the line from Bellwood to Irvona, thru Mahaffey and on to Punxsutawny, connecting with the Brockway & Punxsutawny, a Buffalo, Rochester & Pittsburgh predecessor. The line out of Tyrone through Clearfield was extended to Grampian by 1892.

NYC's entry into the area was much more involved. It first acquired control of the Fall Brook Coal Company and its railroad between Lyons, New York, and Wellsboro, Pennsylvania, then building an additional 79 miles of track through Pine Creek Gorge (known as the Grand Canyon of Pennsylvania) to Jersey Shore, just west of Williamsport. From Jersey Shore, it built west through Avis and Lock Haven, thence southwesterly up Bald Eagle and Beech Creeks into Clearfield, a route which required crossing the deep chasm of lower Moshannon Creek on a large viaduct, still visible from the westbound lanes of I-80, but no longer in use.

Numerous mines controlled by the Clearfield Bituminus Coal Company, an NYC affiliate, dotted the area east of Clearfield, and coal flowed northward to the NYC proper. A small yard was built at the present site in Clearfield and connections effected with the Clearfield & Mahoning, another predecessor of the BR&P. The Beech Creek's main line continued southwesterly to more coal fields near Gazzam. These various lines were reorganized in 1890 into the Beech Creek Railroad and leased to the NYC for 999 years.

The final 15 years of the 19th century saw a massive expansion by both the NYC and PRR. NYC extended the Beech Creek Railroad westerly from Kerrmoor, through two tunnels, to cross into the West Branch watershed, passing through Mahaffey to Dowler Junction and connecting with the Pittsburgh & Eastern, another NYC subsidiary built during the 1890s. The P&E ran to Glen Campbell and Cherry Tree, where it connected with the Cherry Tree & Dixonville, jointly owned by the NYC and PRR. Trackage rights were also obtained over the PRR from Mahaffey to Patton to reach some isolated NYC-affiliated mines around Patton and Hastings.

Also, in 1898, the Clearfield Lumber Company built the Clearfield Southern Railroad from Porter's (Dimeling), a station on the Beech Creek just south of Clearfield Junction. The CSRR followed the meandering Clearfield Creek south, ultimately reaching Irvona. In the early years its purpose was solely as transportation to harvest the timberlands of the lumber company. However, as the timber was exhausted, coal became the primary traffic source and 1905 saw the lumber company sell the Clearfield Southern to the Beech Creek Extension Railroad, more about which will be said in a moment.

The Pennsy began its major push in 1886, building a line south of Irvona all the way to Cresson. This route connected with the one from Bellwood. Then in 1892, construction forces built south from Garway, just below La Jose, through Patton and on to Cresson. This line branched at Bradley Junction to reach Cherry Tree via a tunnel under the divide, thus providing the PRR with an outlet for the jointly owned CT&D. The year 1903 saw all of PRR's Clearfield District lines, totalling 374 miles of track, merged into the Cambria & Clearfield Railroad. The C&C was finally merged into the PRR ten years later.

The area received international attention in 1893 when the Walter L. Main circus train ran away descending Sandy Ridge on the Tyrone line, leaving the rails at the bottom of the 2.86% grade. Many large animals escaped; some were killed, six persons joining them. This wreck is well documented at the Altoona Railroaders Memorial Museum with a photo display.

By the mid-1890s, NYC traffic had developed to the point that the Beech Creek line down the mountain was over-taxed. Trackage rights were then negotiated with the PRR to use their Philadelphia & Erie main line from a new junction just west of Avis to Keating, a distance of 47 miles. NYC then purchased from PRR its branch, built in 1879, extending from Keating up the river to Potterdale and Karthaus. Construction then began on the West Branch Valley Railroad to fill the gap to Clearfield. Four tunnels and three bridges, plus much heavy cutting, were required to maintain a reasonable alignment.

The WBV was completed on July 1, 1902, and construction crews then moved west of Clearfield, building the Clearfield & Bower from a point just east of Mahaffey (Bower) to CB Junction on the BR&P affiliated line (C&M), six miles west of Clearfield. Perpetual trackage rights (Conrail eventually purchased this segment) on C&M completed the route into Clearfield yard, the end result being a water-level line all the way from Cherry Tree to Jersey Shore.

Consolidation of the NYC lines into the Beech Creek Extension Railroad in 1905 did not include the original Beech Creek route from Clearfield Junction east down the mountain, perhaps reflecting its status as a second-string player in the grand scheme of things. Another system-wide consolidation in 1915 then merged all these lines, along with many others, into the modern New York Central System.

The Golden Years

Clearfield County was producing six million tons of coal annually by the turn of the

JEREMY TAYLOR / NEW YORK CENTRAL SYSTEM HISTORICAL SOCIETY COLLECTION

New York Central Alco FA2s wait with a coal train at CB Junction. The Alco cabs will take the train the remaining six miles into Clearfield over rails owned by the Baltimore & Ohio. The tower protecting the NYC/B&O junction was manned around the clock in 1954. A bad wreck occurred here many years earlier that saw an NYC 2-8-2 tumble down to the highway.

century. This figure does not include the output from the east flank of Moshannon Creek (this being part of Centre County), estimated at an additional two million tons at this time.

PRR and NYC 2-8-0s toiled throughout the first 40 years, eventually being relegated to mine shifter duty as larger power began arriving around World War I. Early Beech Creek power had also included a group of 32 4-8-0s; when the Beech Creek was merged into the NYC, they became the only Twelve-Wheelers on the NYC proper (Boston & Albany had some of their own). All were gone by 1915.

On the PRR, H-9 and H-10 Consolidations, plus L-1 Mikados, (and occasionally I-1 Decapod "Hippos") dragged empties and loads between the main line and small assembly yards at Osceola Mills and Bradley Junction. On the NYC side, Mikados and Mohawks handled the line-haul traffic. Traffic off the CT&D was assembled into trains at the yard just north of Cherry Tree, which were run straight through to Avis or Newberry Yard; other mine runs were assembled into trains at Clearfield. In the early years prior to the completion of the WBV, it had been necessary for trains headed east down the original Beech Creek line to be pushed out of Clearfield Yard to summits at Van and Gillintown, usually by pairs of 2-8-0s.

Passenger service peaked in the early '20s, with 28 trains from three railroads serving Clearfield. These branch line trains were never large, typically three or four cars. Initially 4-4-0s, 4-6-0s and, later, sometimes even 2-8-2s did the chores. NYC also employed gas-electric motor cars on the route from Keating up the WBV, and on to Irvona via the Clearfield Southern. Earlier, the Central's record setting No.999 worked the Irvona route for a number of years after it had been re-fitted with smaller drivers. The Depression ended all NYC passenger operations by the mid-'30s, but PRR soldiered on until 1942, its last train from Tyrone to Grampian ending that year with a G-5 4-6-0 doing the honors.

Remarkably, World War II did not produce record coal volume. The high point had occurred in 1918, at 8.9 million tons, which declined to less than three million tons during the Great Depression. The war brought tonnage back up, but the '40s peak missed the old record by half a million tons in 1947. As factories and railroading moved away from coal as a primary fuel, tonnage rapidly declined, a dismal 3.5 million tons being mined in 1954.

Diesels arrived in the form of EMD F7s in 1952 on the PRR, which used them universally, including switching the tipples. Alco roadswitchers arrived in the late '50s and mixed with those from EMD in the '60s.

NYC sent in a mix of Fairbanks-Morse, Alco and Baldwin products, later being joined by Geeps. Alco FA1s were common on the line-haul trains. Operations on both roads at this time still revolved around making "mine runs" with small cuts of cars, then assembling them into trains in the branch line yards. NYC ran its last steam in the region in 1956.

During the early '60s, the old Clearfield Southern was torn up, leaving only a short stub south of Clearfield Junction which is still in use today serving one coal loadout. The original Beech Creek line down the mountain was also de-commissioned below Snow Shoe, and was torn up by the scrapper before he had final authorization to do so. An investigation followed; the contractor was found to have left the state and was never heard from again.

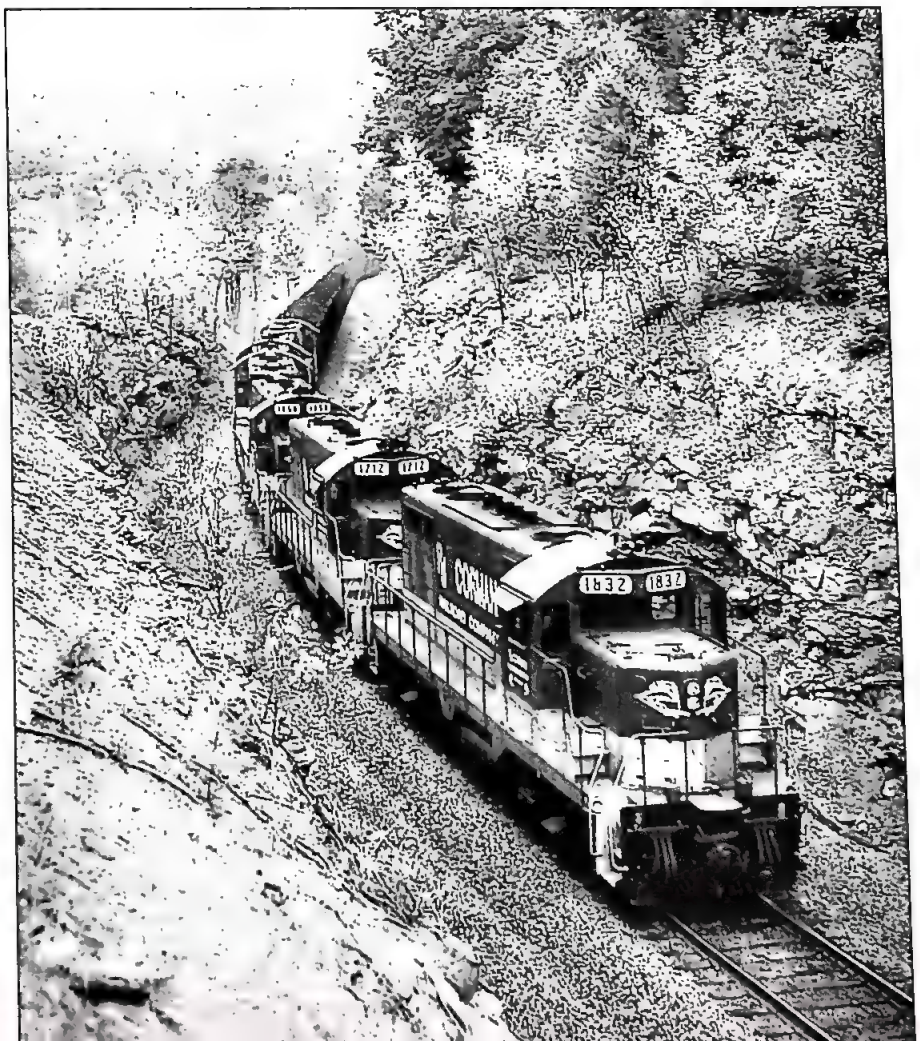
Penn Central and Conrail

Major changes were in the wind as the 1968 Penn Central merger approached. A connector track was installed at the east end of Clearfield Yard enabling trains from the eastern routes to directly access the WBV. The PRR yard at Osceola Mills would be closed and the tortuous line down Sandy Ridge abandoned. Strategic connections would be made between Pennsy and Central trackage and much parallel trackage torn up, especially in the area around Mahaffey. Clearfield Yard and, to a lesser extent, Cherry Tree became the operating hubs, dispatching trains east and south to mainline routes. PC gradually brought in GP30, 35 and 40 locomotives to supplement the earlier models. Even the occasional U-boat or Alco C425 made an appearance. Six-axle power sometimes showed up on trains from the main line, but was always traded for four-axle power at Clearfield for the trip to the tipples.

As the operation of unit trains became more common, the coal business underwent a transformation as well. Numerous small loadouts closed or consolidated into larger operations. There just was no room at most to build loading facilities for 100-car trains. One exceptional loadout was Benjamin Coal's Nos.3 and 5 which were served by a double loop track and could load three to five trains daily.

Even with all these improvements, the physical plant cancer endemic on all of Penn Central started to eat away at the Clearfield Cluster. Delays, derailments and crew overtime soared. By the time Conrail was formed, there was nothing left to do but pour millions of dollars into the track and facilities. Tie gangs, surfacing crews and welded rail smoothed the way. A new yard office and fueling facility graced Clearfield Yard. More duplicate track was torn up. Tunnels were re-lined. GP38s now became the workhorses of the coal fields. Trains

All six RJCP GP16s power a loaded coal train through a cut skirting Curwensville reservoir, ten miles south of Clearfield, in October 1996. The coal is headed to the Conrail main line at Cresson to be forwarded to the Huff Power Plant at New Florence, Pennsylvania. Two GP38s shove hard on the other end.



were dispatched down the WBV at the rate of three to five a day, with all sorts of four- and six-axle main line power. A lesser number went out the south end via Cresson. By 1981, the plant was in excellent shape and tonnage had leveled out at 10.4 million tons annually, handily exceeding the old record, thanks to increasing use by the electrical power utilities.

A coal company-sponsored train to celebrate the opening of Bradford Coal Company's new "Fuel Refinery" at Bigler brought steam power back in 1981. George Hart's ex-Canadian Pacific 4-6-0 No.972 was brought over the Buffalo Line and up the WBV to Clearfield, with a train of seven cars. The train spent the weekend of October 8th and 9th running trips between the coal company's facility at Bigler and the wye at the east end of the yard, hauling employees and company guests, which included then-Vice President George Bush. This operation was not publicized outside 'the area, and few railfans were aware of it, your author included. Yes, even on this branch line, Conrail required "shadow power."

The next big change took place with the implementation of the Clean Air Act of 1990. Clearfield coal tends toward a higher sulphur content than the EPA considers acceptable, although pockets of low-sulphur reserves are numerous. Utility customers began cutting back on volume, forcing more loaders to close and others to reduce their output. The ten million tons annually of the 1980s slipped to four million tons by 1994. Conrail considered this the point at which profitable operation ceased and, with no reason to believe volume would increase, in 1995 put the entire Clearfield Cluster up for sale.

R.J.Corman Corporation, well known for its derailment-cleanup services, was the successful bidder. Several short lines are operated by Corman, all as divisions of one railroad. Hence, the name Pennsylvania Lines, otherwise known as RJCP. Initially, Corman sent managers and crews from Kentucky to operate the railroad along with a few former Conrail people that were hired. Eventually more local people were hired and most of the Kentucky people returned to their former jobs.

ABOVE: **Fresh from the paint booth in May 1997, three GP38s back down onto their empty train at Cresson Yard. The train will load tomorrow at Belford on the WBV line.** BELOW: **The larger loadouts use flood-loading, with the train moving at about two miles an hour. The samplers take three shovelfuls out of each car and sack it for analysis by the lab. Coal mines are paid by the how close their coal comes to the customer's specifications (BTU's, ash, sulphur and such).**

Initially, motive power consisted of 14 GP38-2s, leased from Conrail for several months until six of Corman's ex-Chessie GP16s arrived from Dover, Ohio. Also joining the GP16s were six rough-looking but well-running GP38s (with dynamic brakes) purchased from Conrail; the leased units were then returned. Two hideous ex-SP GP20s were on the property for a time, but were ultimately sent back to Dover.

Back to Reality

I am jolted from my daydreaming by the crew van turning off Route 879 onto the rough lane beside the tracks at the Karthaus road crossing. Fog has decended into the valley since we left our train, and we bump along through the mist to the siding switch, then pile out of the van and load our grips onto the deckplate of lead GP38 No.7710. Mr. Noel sets about releasing handbrakes while Tim checks out the engines and I move our gear into the cab. The moon is beginning to rise over the hills to the east as we begin to roll at 9:03 p.m. We hold to ten m.p.h. for the first mile past the coal loadout at Belford, as the truck crossing has just been rebuilt and is a little soft yet.

Past Belford, Tim works a few notches on the throttle to bring us up to 25 m.p.h. We pass the hamlet of Cataract (four houses), one of which is owned by a gentleman who works second trick at Conrail's SG Tower near Johnstown, a 140-plus mile round trip to work and back. Past Cataract, we are truly alone; not one road, cabin, or electric light mars the landscape for the next fourteen miles. Passing MP 49, Tim calls the Conrail Harrisburg Dispatcher on the radio for instructions. We are told the main is clear and we can proceed to the junction.

As we approach GW Siding, the Conrail empty train, symbol UFS, is waiting, headed up by SD40-2 6408 and three sisters. We glide by at ten per and get a "slow approach" signal at the apex of the wye. Proceeding around the south leg, we are now on Conrail's Buffalo Line, the old Philadelphia & Erie. Another slow approach directs us into the main line passing track, which we follow for four miles, coming to a stop just short of the dwarf signal at South Keating. Kerry pulls the pin and the Geeps pull out onto the main. After notifying the dispatcher, Tim and I walk to the other end of the lash-

up, pass up Kerry and then head north at 35 m.p.h. on the main line to the other end of the junction wye.

At North Keating, we change ends once again, enter the north leg, return to GW Siding and then back down onto our train. Running our units around the wye kept No.7710 on the point (it has a much better cab heater than 7709 in back) and out of the way of the Conrail units, which are by now pumping up the air on our former train. A picture perfect exchange, and darned unusual, I'm told.

The next half-hour is consumed performing an air test, after which the Geeps begin to pull at 12:01 a.m. After getting up to 25 m.p.h., four or five notches on the throttle keeps our 140 cars at a steady pace up the .2% grade. The fog has thinned somewhat, and gaps in the riverbank foliage show the moonlit valley spread out before us. The brightness of our headlight, plus the moonlight, seems to give everything a monochromatic hue, somewhat reminescent of an O. Winston Link night shot.

Approaching Belford, we slow to ten m.p.h. for that soft crossing. While we crawl over it, Tim explains that the old block limit point at the Route 879 crossing was called "OB," in honor of H.R. "Obie" Obleman, a Clearfield trainmaster. His ashes were spread between the rails in 1986. Conrail ironically had the ballast cleaner working the area a couple of weeks later.

Clear of the slow order, Tim notches out the throttle and we plunge into the curving bore of Karthaus Tunnel in Run 8. Nothing can be heard but the thundering howl of five 645s in full cry. The sound ricochets off the metal tunnel liner and penetrates every nook and cranny of the cab, rattling us to the bone (okay, I had my window open a few inches). I try to imagine what passage through this bore was like with an NYC L-2 Mohawk (or two) on the headend. After making a quarter of a circle inside the mountain, we pop out the other end, throttling back to hold track speed. For the next hour and a half, we churn up the valley, only using the horn for three or four crossings in 29 miles.

Arrival at Clearfield is at 2:15 a.m. We drop our loads and 32 hoppers in the yard and, after hanging FRED on the west end, couple up to the remaining 104 empties and then proceed around the wye onto the old Beech Creek Railroad, now known as the Wallceton Secondary. At MP 2.8, Clearfield Junction, we swing around a tight horseshoe to the left, crossing Clearfield Creek on a high steel-and-concrete deck bridge. The stub of the old Beech Creek main to Gazzam veers off just past the bridge to serve the loadout at Owens. We labor up the one percent grade for a half mile, then sweep around the end of the hill on another horseshoe, this one to the right, where the grade stiffens to 1.53%. In a mile and a half, we have more than completed 360 degrees of curvature, one reason the old Beech Creek line down the mountain was difficult to operate.

At MP 6.2, a new (1980) connector veers off to connect to the old PRR track, which is used as a loop for the loader at Bigler. Six more miles brings us to Wallaceton, top of the hill, and we pass off the former NYC and onto the old PRR track (no turnout, Conrail just butted 'em together).

Switching to dynamics, we descend the hill to Philipsburg, then slow way down. Mr. Noel gets out a fusee and drops to the ground to hand-flag all four crossings as we crawl along at five miles an hour. Seems the town doesn't want horns waking everybody up at odd hours, plus close clearances demand such measures even during daylight. Once clear of town, we pick up the pace for the last five miles to Osceola Mills.

Passing the site of the old PRR yard, we play chicken with a local motorist at a crossing. He wisely stops his car and waits for our mile-long train to crawl by. Just south of town, we run around the train, then slowly back it through Coal Run Junction past Leslie Tipple, a low-tech load-in-motion loadout that is the biggest shipper on the line, averaging seven 104-car trains per month. Hand brakes are tied down at 6:15 a.m.

The crew van is waiting and quickly gets

R.J. CORMAN PENNSYLVANIA LINES ROSTER

Number	Model	Heritage
1712	GP16	CRR 911, CRR 4612, SBD 4612, CSXT 1712
1713	GP16	CRR 912, CRR 4613, SBD 4613, CSXT 1713
1737	GP16	SAL 1906, SCL 1006, SCL 4637, SBD 4637, CSXT 1737
1806	GP16	ACL 196, SCL 816, SCL 4760, SBD 4760, CSXT 1806
1827	GP16	ACL 169, SCL 757, SCL 4781, SBD 4781, CSXT 1827
1828	GP16	SAL 1798, SCL 978, SCL 4782, SBD 4782, CSXT 1828
1829	GP16	SAL 1817, SCL 997, SCL 4783, SBD 4783, CSXT 1829
1831	GP16	ACL 147, SCL 735, SCL 4785, SBD 4785, CSXT 1831
1832	GP16	SAL 1777, SCL 957, SCL 4786, SBD 4786, CSXT 1832
1856	GP16	WofA 524, WofA 4977, SBD 4977, CSXT 1858
4119	GP20E	SP 7204, SP 4054, SP 4119
7681	GP38	PC 7681, Conrail 7681
7697	GP38	PC 7697, Conrail 7697
7710	GP38	PC 7710, Conrail 7710
7908	GP38	PC 7908, Conrail 7908
7909	GP38	PC 7909, Conrail 7909
7910	GP38	PC 7910, Conrail 7910
7918	GP38	PC 7918, CR 7918

Note: Roster reflects Corman locomotives lettered for Pennsylvania assignment; these may be used on other Corman operations, and other Corman locomotives may be found in Pennsylvania.

Roster information courtesy of Ken Ardinger

Tagging along for the ride downhill to Clearfield, a pair of GP16s trail a coal train past the junction with the Cresson line at Mahaffey in October 1996. A quartet of GP38s are pulling the train on the other end. The light engines on the Cresson line were set out earlier; tomorrow they will run down to Cresson to pick-up an empty train.

After backing onto their train at GW, four GP's pump the air on 105 cars. When the air test is complete, they will head for Clearfield Yard, continuing on to K&J Coal Company's loadout on the Cresson track for loadingthe next day.

us back to the yard office. I thank Tim and Kerry for putting up with me all night, and head for my motel for some much-needed shut-eye. Hopefully they won't make me check out at the usual 11:00 a.m., only four hours away! (They didn't.)

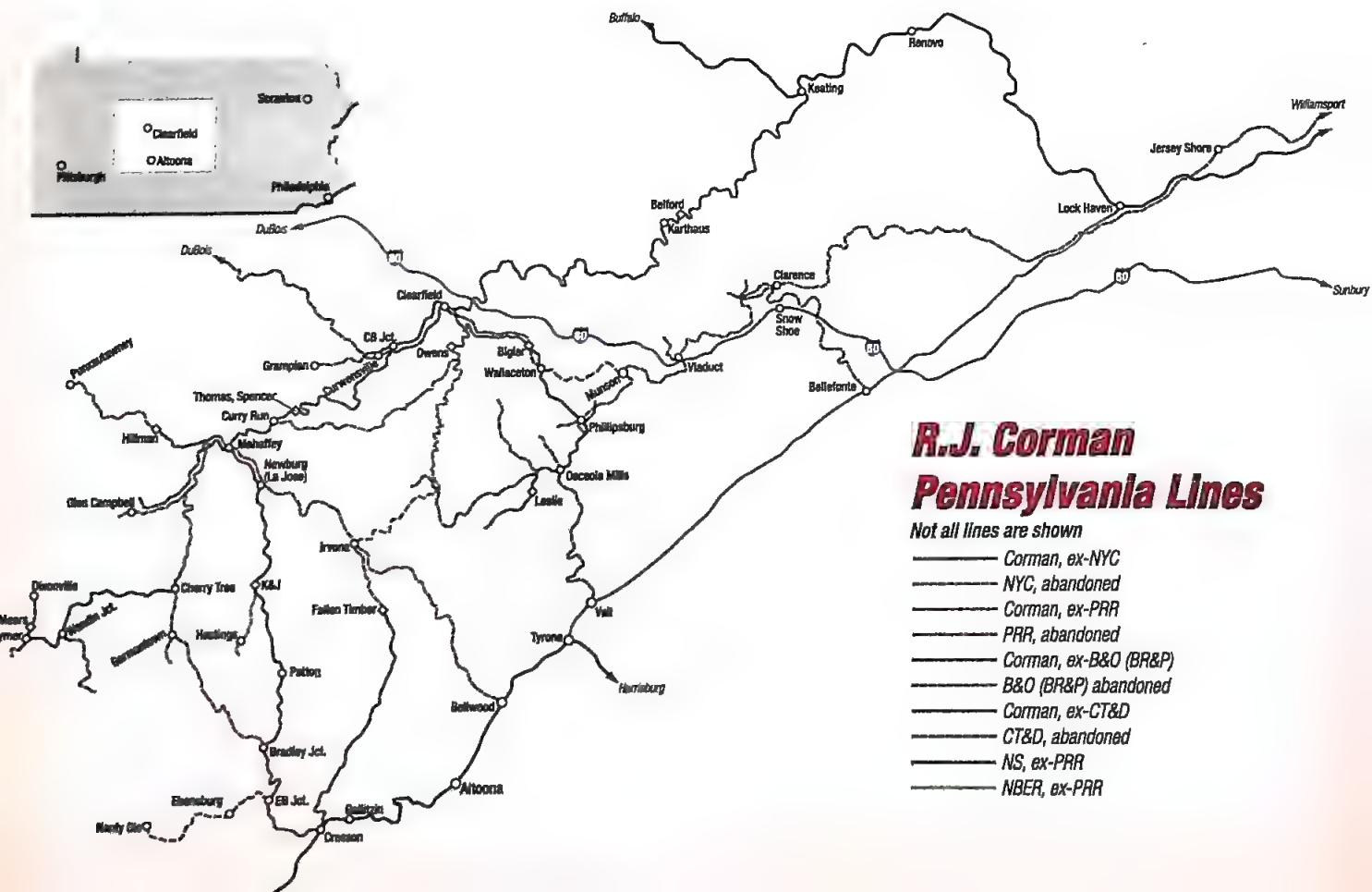
Railfanning the Corman Lines

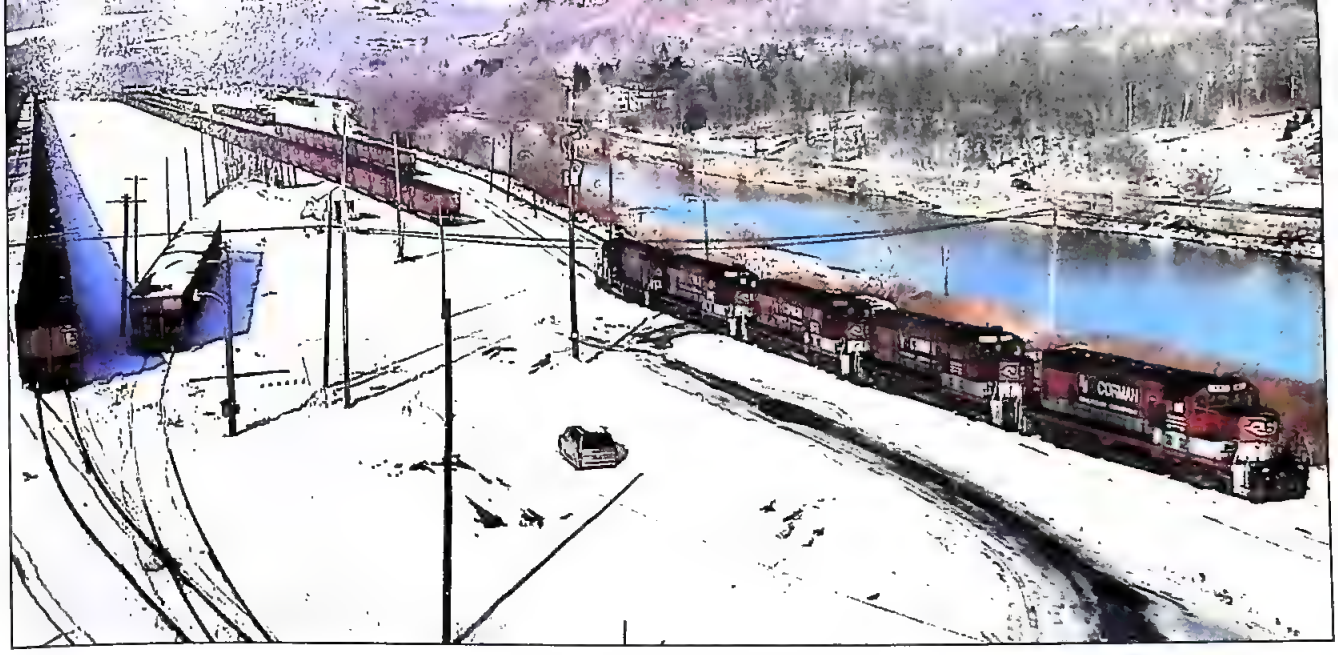
Due to the size of RJCP, a general overview, rather than a step-by-step guide will be offered. Railfanning this 250-mile short line will mostly appeal to the "hunters" among us. If high volume lines populated with fast trains are your thing, then RJCP is likely not for you. Usually, only one train a day is out, but if it is timed and positioned right, speeds are such that you can follow along and bag photos at many locations. About half the tipples are visible from public roads; Bradford Coal at Bigler even has an observation deck high on the hillside. Occasionally, two trains operate on a given day. Meets are most likely at Karthaus Siding on the WBV, Clearfield Yard or at Mahaffey.

Generally the mines prefer to load during the day. Therefore, traffic is most likely in the morning, late-afternoon and evening (or overnight, as in the narrative just presented). For this reason, late spring and summer are best, due to the long days. Don't miss the fall colors, either, which typically peak the week after Columbus Day.

A business-like visit to the yard office will fill you in on the day's operations. Access is by the driveway behind the CVS drugstore in downtown Clearfield. Remember, "safety first" when on the property! Regarding safety, I would like to stress two important items — first, never, ever walk through any of the tunnels. Clearances are very close, and if you are wrong about the timing of a train and get "caught" inside, you will die. The "hidden" ends of the tunnels aren't very photogenic, anyway. Also, always use caution in the wilds regarding wild animals; the area has snakes, abundant deer, and the occasional bear (although I've only seen one from a distance). During hunting season, watch for two-legged animals bearing sidearms, and wear your orange hat!

To navigate, a Delorme Pennsylvania Atlas is a must (available at Wal-Mart in town), or you can print your own maps off their CD. Scout your photo spots in advance, as the best spots and parking will take a little time to figure out. I've found the best way to railfan RJCP is to plan three or four days in the area. Out of four days, one will be dead (you can always go down to Altoona), two with one train out and one with too much activity to get it all. Choices of lodging, food and fuel are numerous in Clearfield, mostly clustered around the Route 879 exit off I-80 northeast of town. Stock up before heading out to the more remote ends of the line, as the few places available there tend to close up early, if they exist at all.





ABOVE: **At the east end of Clearfield Yard, in their winter grime, five GP38s move through the yard to tie on to the loaded train on the left and then take it down the WBV. Other "system" (Conrail) hoppers await their turn to load in the active section of the yard. The large open area between loads and empties consists of about ten "bowl tracks", no longer used and likely to be dismantled in the near future. The yard office and diesel pit are at the far west end.** BELOW: **After dropping their loaded train at South Keating on Conrail's Buffalo Line (the old Philadelphia & Erie), four GP38s roll by the signal and their awaiting pick-up at GW crossover. This signal is not track-circuited and simply displays an advance aspect for the signal at the junction wye.**

Some of the most scenic areas include the entire WBV, the east end of the Fulton tunnel and bridge (access off I-80), Clearfield Junction (hike in off the county road under the power line), the area around Mahaffey, the line from Curwensville out to Bellwood, the loop just past Fleming Summit on the old CT&D and, of course, Clearfield Yard (off the highway bridge at the east end). The Fallen Timber line is operated with RJCP crews using Norfolk Southern power, fore and aft, and access to the loader is easy.

The Future

The railroad had a dismal year in 1999. Phase II of the 1990 Clean Air Act began to take effect, causing the primary customer of the coal producers, Penn Power's Strawberry Ridge generating plant, to begin burning less Clearfield coal. Also, the "spot" market for coal became erratic. Power Operating, Inc., owner of Leslie tipple and the road's biggest shipper, went bankrupt and shut down, ending operation east of Bigler on the old T&C. Tonnage lagged far behind 1998, cutting traffic 40 percent. Car supply was also affected by the chaotic NS take-over of most of Pennsylvania's Conrail lines.

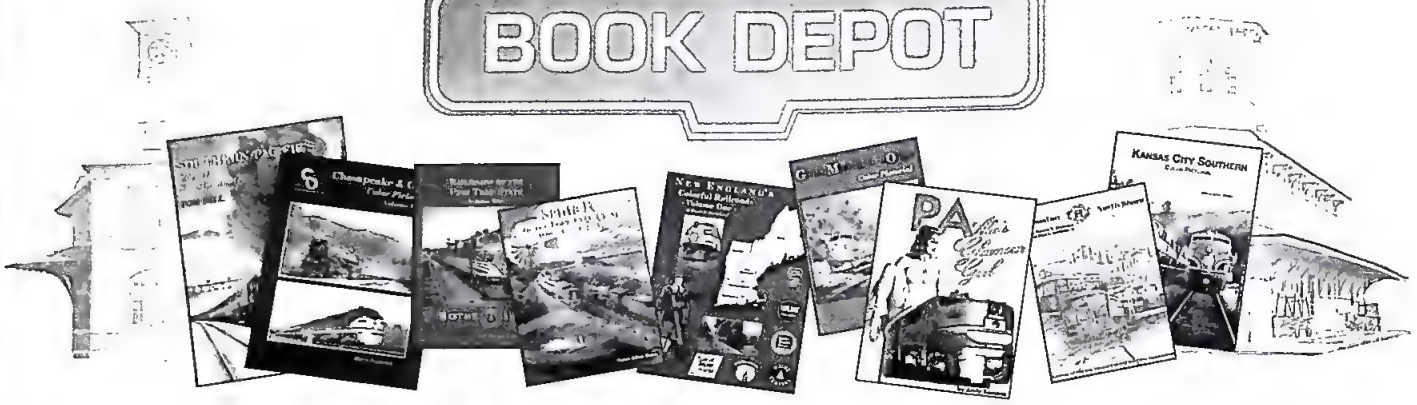
During January 2000, however, things began looking up. NS was having trouble keeping its southwestern Pennsylvania-to-New York state coal conduit (via Ashtabula, Ohio, and Erie, Pa.) fluid, and began routing empty trains down the Buffalo Line to Keating, over RJCP to Cresson, thence west on the main line to the mines. These trains, up to 20 per month, are operated over RJCP with their crews and the NS road power. An occasional loaded NS train is routed over RJCP, but most of these go up the Nittany & Bald Eagle farther to the east. Both these routes keep coal traffic headed for Strawberry Ridge from having to backtrack from Harrisburg.

Later in the year Mears Enterprises, operator of the sole loadout on the old CT&D at Clymer, inked a contract with New York Gas & Electric that will make them the road's biggest shipper within two years. Welcome news, indeed, as the line out to Clymer always seemed to be living on borrowed time, usually shipping only one train per month. Two or three per week will be the ultimate volume, requiring track upgrading (already under way) and likely construction of a new siding near Cherry Tree to handle the traffic. The Shawville power plant may also begin receiving Clymer coal via a 20-car shuttle train, operating nearly daily. Another firm, Waroquier, may begin loading trains at the former NYC yard site in Cherry Tree. For the time being the T&C will be left in place out to Leslie, just in case someone wants to resume shipments.

So, rather than continuing an overall decline, as Conrail had anticipated, Clearfield coal continues being funneled down the West Branch Valley in 100 car unit trains by RJCP's red and silver Geeps, helping feed the energy needs of the nation.

I would like to sincerely thank all the employees and officers of RJCP who have helped me in innumerable ways to tell the story of the Clearfield Cluster, especially Gary Pettingil, and Tim Potts, who was recently promoted to Division Manager upon Gary's retirement. Also, thanks is due the many former railroaders, people from the coal industry, and others, that provided information and encouragement in the preparation of this article. — J.A.B.

BOOK DEPOT



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On The Menu

News and detail on dining by rail — by JAMES D. PORTERFIELD

Mazomania

IT MAY NOT BE that the best thing about the Wisconsin & Southern Railroad's Ride-'n'-Dine operation is the train itself, as enjoyable as that is. It may not be the meal at The Old Feed Mill, as pleasant as that is, too. No, to this rider, the most entertaining thing about a day spent on the Wisconsin & Southern (WSOR) dinner train was the destination: Mazomanie (pronounced MAY-zoe-MAY-knee), Wisconsin.

This adventure of discovery began on a pleasantly hot Sunday in August in Madison, Wisconsin. At the old Milwaukee Road station on West Washington Street, as dozens of passengers milled about in the sunshine, Wisconsin & Southern's *Northern Pride*, the 12:30 p.m. train to Mazomanie, arrived on time. The train, with E9s front and back in a "pull-pull" configuration, three ex-Amtrak smooth side Heritage fleet 44-seat coaches and a baggage car converted to a gift shop, is distinctive and reminiscent in its matching red, white and silver streamlined livery (railroad owner Bill Gardner's creation). Orderly boarding, an on-time departure and a fast-paced trip got us to Mazomanie in under an hour. Along our 26.3 mile route we passed through the University of Wisconsin campus, suburban Madison, Middleton, the Black Earth Creek Valley and watershed, Black Earth station and Lake Marion.

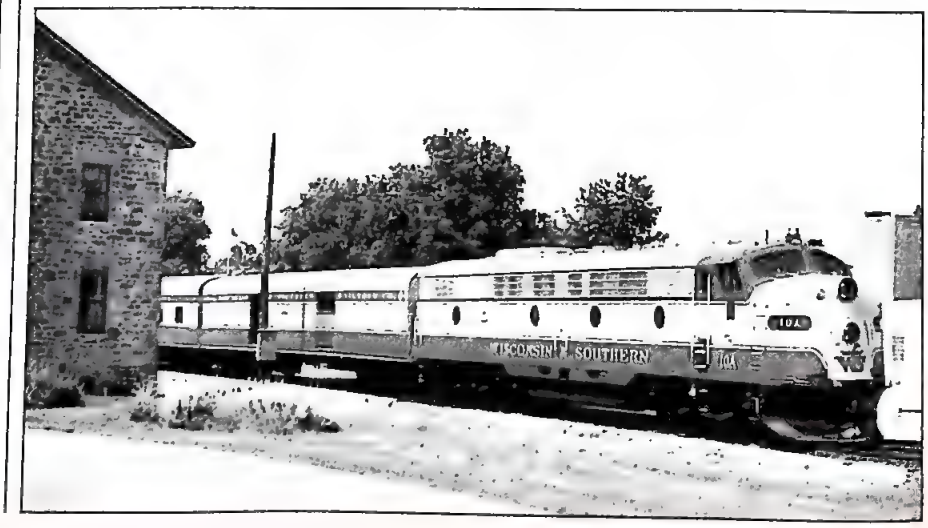
Operating on the second Sunday of every month, the railroad makes two dinner train runs to Mazomainie and back. One departs at 10:00 a.m. and returns at 1:45 p.m. The other departs at 12:30 p.m., and returns at 4:00 p.m. Riding in cars whose interior decor attests to their Amtrak heritage (and they had been used on that railroad's Chicago to Milwaukee *Hiawathas*), one's interest in the rolling wooded hills, farmland, and villages of southern Wisconsin outside is matched by interesting railfans on the inside.

Delrosa Bruns, whose hobo moniker is "Real Rail Rosie," entertains with stories about life as the wife of a Milwaukee Road station agent, including instructions on how to kill a rat that has gotten into a kitchen drawer. Or Robert Dorr, whose card says he's a "railroad modeler, photographer, historian," who describes an early ride on the route we are following, and points out that beyond Mazomanie the railroad, at Prarie du Chien, once crossed the Mississippi on a pontoon bridge. Or Bob Welke, WSOR Manager of Passenger Excursions, and other WSOR employees and volunteers, who tell how this operation began as a charter by attendees to the National Model Railroad Association's annual meeting in Madison; how it was recognized as a good idea and expanded through marketing to tour groups; and how word-of-mouth created sufficient demand to open it to the general public.

Arriving in Mazomanie, we detrain alongside The Old Feed Mill, a restaurant, bakery and gift shop housed in a stone mill built in 1857, the year Mazomanie was platted as a village. Owners Dan and Nancy Viste, who began in 1992 to carefully restore the once-crumbling building, greet and direct guests to family-style seating in a sunlit dining room just oozing country charm, with an eclectic assortment of furniture, quilts and floral displays on the walls, farm and kitchen utensils hanging from the beams and rafters.

Young servers busy themselves with our setups while we ponder a tempting array of goodies displayed on a groaning-board buffet. Here we can choose among — or take one or more of each of — such specialties as Maple-glazed Smoked Pork, Chicken Pot Pie, the award-winning Cider Roasted Chicken and Garlic Mashed Potatoes. Beef, seafood, and pasta dishes, and vegetables of the season complete the main course

The Wisconsin & Southern Northern Pride *awaits its passengers' return while spotted alongside the picturesque Old Feed Mill in the historic village of Mazomanie, Wisconsin.*



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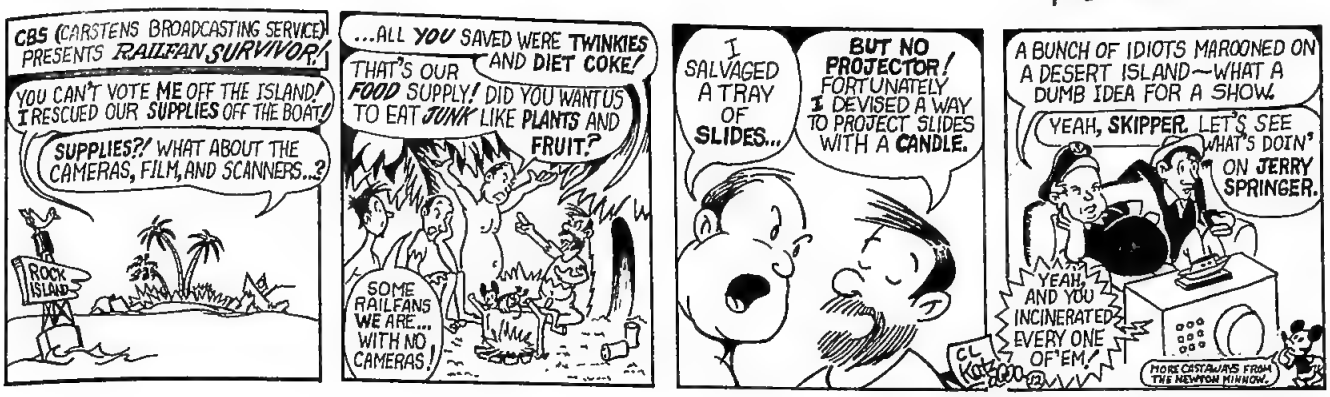
RAILFUN

by CURT KATZ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SOME RAILFANS WE ARE... WITH NO CAMERAS!
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BUT NO PROJECTOR! FORTUNATELY I DEVISED A WAY TO PROJECT SLIDES WITH A CANDLE.
A BUNCH OF IDIOTS MAROONED ON A DESERT ISLAND—WHAT A DUMB IDEA FOR A SHOW.
YEAH, SKIPPER. LET'S SEE WHAT'S DOIN' ON JERRY SPRINGER.
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MORE CASTAWAYS FROM THE NEWTON MINNOW.

selections. Other sides include fresh fruit, and breads and pastries baked on the premises. And dessert? A favorite with dinner train patrons, Bread Pudding with Carmel Sauce, is recommended, but other selections await our divided attention. For the breakfast/brunch crowd, there are eggs, bacon, sausage, French toast and more.

"Our signature item is honey wheat bread," says Dan Viste. "We use organic wheat from Wisconsin or Nebraska, and stone mill the flour fresh daily. That freshness produces a distinctive taste in our bread. It tastes just as it would have 150 years ago, because that's how it's made."

Other dinner train operations conclude at this point, with guests either detraining at the end of a round trip or reboarding for the return trip, and with everyone heading home. What makes a day on the WSOR extra special is the opportunity it presents to stroll on one's own, or to join a tour guided by Dan Viste through the remanants of a once-thriving little rail center: Mazomanie. For this was a town put down here by a predecessor line of the Milwaukee Road. "At that time," says Viste of the the 1850s, "locomotives could only travel 25 or 30 miles before they needed to replenish their water. When track was laid west out of Madison through this area, the railroad built a dike to maintain a level roadbed. Damming a stream running between the track and a bluff west of it produced Lake Marion and provided a source of water and of water power. The railroad sold the rights to the water power to the Lynch & Walker Flouring Mill. The mill, in turn, provided a revenue for the railroad, and drove the development of a bustling community."

Meanwhile, the railroad built a large station, a single-stall enginehouse, a turntable and a wye, a water tank and related physical plant at Mazomanie. A junction with the Sauk City branch that served the Badger Ordnance Plant and other train movements, requireded a small yard as well. Mazomanie, with its rail connection, also became home to a brewery, a wagon factory, a cooperage, a manufacturer of fanning mills (which clean grain), a poultry plant, blacksmith shops and, thanks to the water power generated at the mill, an electric company. "Mazomanie was the first city in Dane County to have electric lights," says Viste. They were powered by turbines in the basement of the mill, which could be turned off there if people were in the streets too late at night.

Today, traces of this activity can still be seen. The mill and 33 other buildings, including a quaint cluster of downtown businesses that branch off of the street leading to the station, are on the National Register of Historic Places. Well-executed history kiosks, sign boards lavished with old photographs, illustrations (including Sanborn maps) and text, dot the tour route and enable one to envision life in an earlier, simpler time. The Mazomanie Historical Museum, in the old Electric Company building (take care not to trip over the abandoned rail buried in the pavement out front), amplifies the history of Mazomanie, so named by a railroad executive after a First Peoples tribal leader he'd befriended. Some streets bear the names of railroad officials or their friends and family. The walk gets us back to the mill in plenty of time to reboard the train back to Madison.

By all means, plan to ride the Wisconsin & Southern dinner train. Enjoy the ride, as well as your meal at The Old Feed Mill. But keep your eye politely on your time piece, and leave enough time to absorb some wonderful, and wonderfully retold, railroad history while you're there. Perhaps you, too, will become a "Mazomaniac."

Beginning in January, 2001, trains will depart from the former Milwaukee Railroad Middleton Station at 1811 Parmenter Street, Middleton, Wisconsin. By maintaining departure times, but shortening the trip to 16.3 miles, guests will have more time to spend at Mazomanie. Over the summer, runs will be added on Tuesdays and Thursdays to accommodate tour groups.

For information, visit these web sites (or call): *www.wsorrailroad.com* or 608/241-9767 for the Wisconsin & Southern; *www.oldfeedmill.com* or 608/795-4909 for The Old Feed Mill; and *www.mazoarea.com* for the Mazomanie community.

PLEASE SEND correspondence concerning ON THE MENU directly to James Porterfield, 763 Cricklewood Drive, State College, PA 16803.

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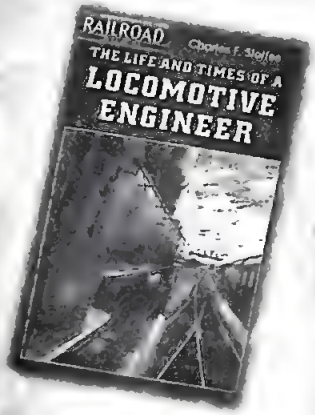
The Life and Times of a
LOCOMOTIVE ENGINEER
by Charles F. Steffes

Charles Steffes worked as a fireman and locomotive engineer on the Southern Pacific from 1937 until his retirement in 1976. His humorous and insightful autobiography brings to life a time of transition on the rails — the historic change from vintage steam power to first generation diesels.



Steffes details the glory days of this exciting era in railroading in California — before, during and after World War II. Attempting to enlist in the Seabees, Steffes discovered that the SP had gotten him an essential war deferment: See what it was like during the hectic war years as traffic grew heavier, and the changes wrought by diesel locomotives. **$19.95 +S&H**

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Union Pacific's Triple Track Main

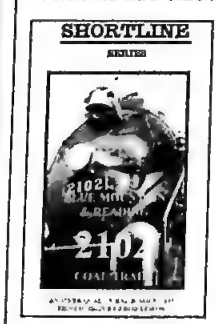
Pentrex, P.O. Box 94911, Pasadena, CA 91109-4911; 800/950-9333; 95 minutes; DVD or VHS; $29.95 each, plus $4.00 shipping.

Uncle Pete, choked with coal, stack, and other traffic on his Kearney Subdivision funnel in the middle of Nebraska, decided to triple-track the 110 miles from North Platte east to Gibbon Junction. Finished in 1999, the upgrading offers an almost unlimited parade of heavy traffic pulled by modern six-axle Armour Yellow diesels, with a few SP, D&RGW, BN and C&NW units thrown in for good measure. Over several days of shooting, Pentrex presents us with over 90 trains running in both directions from dawn to dusk.

Starting at North Platte, we move east town by town, staying at each location generally for more than one train. The scenic grandeur of Nebraska being its flat, wide open spaces, the camera crew makes use of manmade props where available — grain elevators, signals, the occasional depot, highway overpasses and across-the-field shots, but not every location is a gem. The line runs east-west, so the lighting is sometimes back-lit in one direction. Given the density of traffic, we see several meets and trains overtaking each other on adjacent tracks. The frequent Powder River Basin coal trains often have a single pusher on the rear. There are regular manifests, too. A good amount of time is spent at Buttermilk Curve, which provides some opportunities for different angles. Rest assured, this tape is primarily runbys on long tangents, with the limited camera creativity that this situation offers. Of course, the tape is technically fine in terms of color, sharpness, steadiness of images, camera handling, and stereo sound. There is little narration and few diversions from the railroad action, but we do have a good map and on-screen identification of each train seen. Good viewing for those interested in modern traffic patterns, or who want to watch the big action roll under sunny Midwestern skies. — *Tom Kelcec*

Blue Mountain & Reading 2102 Coal Train

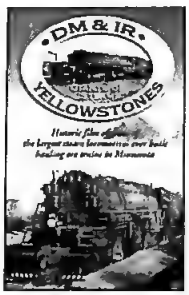
High Iron Railroad Videos, P.O. Box 780155, Maspeth, NY 11378-0155; 800/321-78565; 22 minutes; $19.95 each plus $3.25 shipping; NY residents add 8.25% tax.



One of the last times this 4-8-4 ran was when it powered a chartered coal train for an invited caboose load of photographers one-way between Pottsville and Reading, Pennsylvania. This short tape presents both runby and cab-action footage. If you were a railfan on the trip, this is what you would have seen — switching, runbys at Pottsville and Port Clinton, the wonderful stone arch Peacock bridge and other tidbits such as riding the caboose. While the consist had a properly lettered caboose, on loan from the Reading Technical & Historical Society, the hoppers are modern and the lettering on the tender is too large, needed to cover the workaday Blue Mountain & Reading lettering. Image quality is okay, the sound a little "off" at times, but the smoke and exhaust ring true, and a good time was had by all. If you missed Reading T1s hauling coal in regular service out of Shamokin, here is a hint of what it was like. — *Tom Kelcec*

DM&IR Yellowstones

Greg Scholl Video Productions Dept. R, P.O. Box 123, Batavia, OH 45103-0123; 513/732-0660; *www.gregschollvideo.com*, 30 minutes; $19.95 each plus $5.00 shipping; Ohio residents add 6% sales tax.



Being a devotee of the biggest steam power that our rails can support, and having finally, after many years, seen three stuffed Yellowstones in person, I eagerly awaited this tape. I was not disappointed. This 16mm Kodachrome footage was all shot by Maynard Laing, with live sound recorded by traveling companion Elwin Purrington. The two chased and paced several of the brutish, 63"-drivered 2-8-8-4s in their twilight years of 1958 and 1959. One of the engines shown here, No.227, is now on display at the museum in Duluth, and its wheels still go 'round and 'round in a creative display. Biggest cab on earth, too.

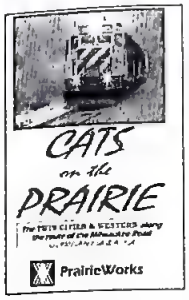
After a nice introduction to the corporate history of the DM&IR and its steam power through black & white photos and narration, we start pacing and chasing Yellowstones as they ply the tangent track generally from Iron Junction to Proctor. Pacing angles vary from tight views to wider angles which show the full smoke plume. We pace at speed and also capture starts. The weather is generally overcast, but exposures are quite good with only a few dark scenes. Several Yellowstone meets are captured. We also observe taking water en route, and there are cameo in-cab views and a quick shot or two of ex-EJ&E 2-8-2s. At Proctor we see No.226 going onto the turntable and into the roundhouse. Lineside angles are varied by standing on the few overpasses and using structures as props. Ever the good railfans, we see the group's 1949 De Soto stuck in the mud (not a rental car) and a shot of the group, including one young Hal Lewis.

The film transfer is quite good, while the image quality varies based on the weather. The pacing footage is pretty good, too, given the conditions. The live sound, dubbed to the silent footage, varies in quality, but when everything is right, you definitely get

the full feeling of these hard-working articulateds. While shots in the sun are rare here, this is a fine presentation of an important subject. — *TOM KELCEC*

CATS on the Prairie: The Twin Cities & Western

PrairieWorks Productions, 6300 Sequoia Circle, Eden Prarie, MN 55346-1427; 612/937/0638; *www.prairie-works.com;* 72 minutes; VHS format; $24.95 plus $3.80 shipping; MN residents add sales tax.



Running on ex-Milwaukee Road trackage west from Minneapolis-St. Paul to the South Dakota border, this midwestern regional makes an interesting claim to fame in that its main roster of GP20s is all powered by Caterpillar diesels. There are also GP15Cs, GP30Cs and 487 covered hoppers on the roster. This is the first commercial tape on the TC&W, primarily a granger road with the best natural scenery at the western end of the line. This tape presents the railroad via focusing on each of the line's six separate runs (a.k.a. 'turns').

We start in the spaghetti bowl of the Twin Cities (about 37 miles from the railroad's modest headquarters at Glencoe) and watch as TC&W delivers grain and traverses various tracks and yards of other railroads in the area. There are some unusual maneuvers, and the narration keeps us well informed. After our urban visit, we watch each of the other turns in more rural settings, servicing the many elevators on the line. An interesting and educational diversion is a tour of a sugar beet processing plant, a TC&W shipper. A cameo appearance is made by the Sisseton Milbank Railroad.

Included with the tape is a very attractive and useful railfan guide to the line. It has maps covering major junctions and operational points, describes the usual operations and suggests how to get to photo locations. Scanner frequencies and an employee timetable page are also included. The image quality here is good (shot on mini-DV and Hi-8) if not perfect, and the photo angles traditional railfan in nature. The research, narration and presentation is well thought out and very informative, and each unique aspect of TC&W operations appears covered. This tape should be a pre-requisite for anyone thinking of railfanning the area or who is just interested in another one of the nation's regionals. — *TOM KELCEC*

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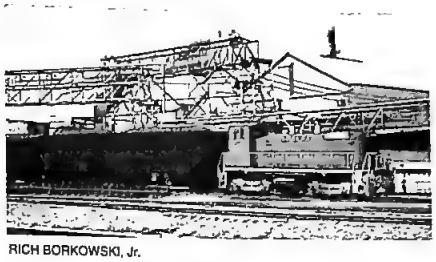

RICH BORKOWSKI, Jr.

• TRANSTAR: The four former U.S. Steel railroads in the Pittsburgh area now operate as Transtar's Valley-Lake Connection. Rich Borkowski, Jr., gives us a look at these movers of raw materials.

JOHN C. ILLMAN

• HEADING EAST — 1950: Join John C. Illman on a trip from Berkeley, California, to South Bend, Indiana, to pick up a new Studebaker. Along the way he saw and photographed some very interesting rail action.

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Transit Currents

Light rail, transit and commuter rail news

South Shore Line

WHAT FOLLOWS is not a done deal. It depends on a great deal of local finance to make it all come true. Even so, the trustees of the Northern Indiana Commuter Transportation District voted on August 25, 2000, to extend South Shore Line commuter rail service to Valparaiso and Lowell, Indiana.

Under the plan proposed in a major investment study by consultants T.Y. Lin Bascor of Chicago, the current trackage owned by NICTD and local communities along the old Monon Railroad, from Hammond and Munster to Airline Junction, would be electrified. For trains to reach the present South Shore Line trackage, the consultants propose crossing under the Hohman Avenue bridge over the Indiana Harbor Belt and then building new electrified trackage on the south side of the IHB right-of-way. The new line would head northwest, parallel to the IHB for about five miles. The IHB appears willing to work with NICTD and cooperate with the consultants, agreeing that the right-of-way is wide enough for NICTD to lay its own track. About five miles from Hammond, NICTD would build a viaduct to fly over the IHB and other tracks, and then return to ground level in order to use the IHB's Kensington Branch to reach the South Shore Line tracks east of the junction with Metra Electric at Kensington. From Airline Junction to Kensington, the line would be electrified at 1500 volts d.c., the same as the South Shore Line.

Service along the Canadian National, (the erstwhile Grand Trunk Western) east from Airline Junction to Valparaiso would, according to the consultants, use dual-powered locomotives, similar to the DM30C's used in the New York City area. The same would be true of service south along CSX through Dyer, past Schererville, Cedar Lake, and on to terminate at Lowell. CN and CSX will both have to allow the new commuter service to use their trackage.

This is a complicated, long-term, and very expensive project. As a board member, I have been privy to certain information before it was made public, and was not surprised to find that the total cost of reaching both Valparaiso and Lowell should be somewhere in the neighborhood of $350 to $400 million. The key to carrying out the project is obtaining sufficient local money to match federal funds. NICTD will be competing with other new rail startups for federal funds. Since its creation by the state of Indiana in 1977, NICTD has received federal transit funds and has been generously supported the by the state, but it is the only commuter railroad in the U.S. with no local tax support. Trying to be realistic, and knowing the money problem, I don't think the entire project will be finished much before the end of the decade.

Metrorail nears completion

Five stations on the Washington Metrorail Green Line will open on January 13, 2001. Operating south and east from the current Anacostia terminal, the new stations will be Congress Heights, Southern Avenue, Naylor Road, Suitland and Branch Avenue. The Branch Avenue terminal will be the site of a 37-acre rail yard with storage available for 116 rail cars. The January opening is three months ahead of schedule. Opening the Green Line station will mean completion of the original 103-mile WMATA Metrorail system that was started a quarter century earlier.

According to John Hanlon, the new stations are only the beginning of improvements to WMATA service. Trains are operating later at night on weekends, with service offered until 2:00 a.m. Fare boxes that will accept the magnetic fare cards used in the Washington subway are to be installed on WMATA buses, so riders will no longer need to pay the fare in exact change. The new bus fare boxes are expected to be installed by the end of 2001. Major improvements in bus service will be made, including both new long distance suburb-to-suburb bus lines as well as feeder service to the rail lines.

Whether it is this summer's high price of gasoline, the fact that WMATA is doing a better job in providing service, or that people are more accepting of transit, both WMATA bus and rail services have enjoyed significant ridership increases in the past year. Metro buses saw an increase of ten percent compared with the previous year, so now an average of 475,000 trips are taken on WMATA buses each weekday. A record level of 600,000 weekday trips are being taken on the Washington Metrorail system.

The huge ridership on the Metrorail subway is a mixed blessing. Revenues are up, but crowding is increasing. It is expected that the number of Metrorail riders will double over the next 25 years, and the system will be strained in a way that its planners and developers could not imagine when it was originally developed. For example, most Metro stations were not designed to comfortably handle the number of riders that currently use them. The problem is more than simply redesigning and rebuilding or modifying stations. Expect to see more trains operating on shorter headways to provide more throughput. Many thanks to John Hanlon and Henry Goode for the good news from the nation's capital.

East Troy: The trolleys Are saved

The headline item in the August 2000, *Wisconsin Trolley Gazette* is "The Trolleys are Saved." The article that follows covers the Save the Trolleys campaign, which was the largest fund-raising effort in the history of the trolley museum at East Troy. Celebrating the event was an open house and picnic on August 26th; the event featured special operation of all of the East Troy Railroad Museum's stored trolleys, along with entertainment and refreshments. The purchase of the trolley

by GEORGE M. SMERK

to be expanded

collection means it is only a few years until the Friends of East Troy Railroad Museum take over operation of the museum. Attendance at East Troy was boosted by the "Train to the Trolleys," co-sponsored by the Twentieth Century Railroad Club of Chicago and the museum; over 1000 people visited the museum on May 6th and 7th aboard the trains from Chicago. The Friends of the East Troy Railroad Museum can be reached at PO Box 556, Waukesha, WI, 53187-0556, 262/548-3837; *www.easttroyrr.org*.

San Diego news

Light rail in the United States got a major push forward by the success of the San Diego trolley in the early 1980s. The trolley is still doing good business, even while it expands with the construction of a new line. Indeed, in March 2000 a single-month ridership record was set when 2,584,204 people used the trolley system. This is a 1.5% increase over the October 1998 high. The year 2000 did very well, with the average weekday ridership up to 90,104, which is 14.2% over a like period in 1999.

Not standing still, the San Diego Trolley's Mission Valley East line will see construction begin at the very end of 2000 or the beginning of 2001. The extension of the line will include the first subway on the San Diego trolley system, which is to serve San Diego State University. The underground portion of the railway will run under the university to a station directly under the present bus pickup area. The line will proceed east from the university to connect with the rest of the system at the Grossmont station.

Also from San Diego, the San Diego Electric Railway Association will have its museum housed in the historic, 1882-vintage National City depot. The museum opened on August 26, 2000, and will be open every Saturday and Sunday from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. The station was the initial Pacific Coast terminus depot and general office building of the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railroad. There will be displays of San Diego railroad history, including, of course, the county's historic electric railways. Thanks to Douglas I. Duncan for the news.

Seashore Trolley Museum needs help

One of the must-visit places for the electric railway enthusiast is the Seashore Trolley Museum in Kennebunkport, Maine (P.O. Box A, Kennebunkport, ME 04046-1690). Unfortunately, not enough people have been visiting. Other museums in the United States, and not just railway-oriented museums, have seen a drop in patronage. Contact the Seashore Trolley Museum and see how you can help, both in person and financially.

Flashes

Streetcars along **BOSTON'S ARTERY PARK** are proposed by HAP International (P.O. Box 290508, Charlestown, MA 02129). The depression of the Central Artery Expressway provides the opportunity to build a streetcar link between North and South stations. Construction of a vintage streetcar line that would serve a number of purposes is proposed. It would link the railroad stations for passengers going through to and from Portland, Maine, on the new Amtrak service that should begin shortly. Passengers using water shuttles and MBTA ferries at Rowes Wharf would find the new transportation link convenient. The proposed line would link the north end, Faneuil Hall marketplace and the New England Aquarium in Chinatown. To get more information on e-mail, try *HAPInternational@mediaone.net*.

Sal Corvo informs me that the NIMBYs are out in force in **PHOENIX** on the subject of where the new light rail lines will be built. A near riot broke out when an alignment along 15th Avenue was suggested. The thought of light rail cars passing schools has parents and educators up in arms. They feel noise would be a problem. Haven't they heard the noise from highways?

It seems that **TRINITY RAILWAY EXPRESS** linking Dallas and Fort Worth has discovered what other commuter rail, rapid transit and light rail operators have found: there's never enough parking space. On the first day of regular operations, Trinity Railway Express was short of parking. More Fort Worth residents than expected drove up to the northeast Tarrant County station to catch the TRE train. The same problem faced the Red Line subway in Los Angeles. Where are those people who said no one would ride? Thanks to Mike Murray.

Some folks may be interested in more information about the Central Platte Valley light rail transit line in **DENVER**. Called the Light Rail Spur, it will link up with the downtown portion of the Denver light rail line at Auraria Campus and travel in a semicircle west, north and east, terminating at Denver Union Terminal. If you would like to know more, write to Regional Transportation District, Andy Leong, Project Manager, 1600 Blake Street, No.41, Denver, CO 80202.

The **INTERURBAN RAILWAY STATION MUSEUM** in Plano, Texas, is a good place to visit. There are interesting materials on the Texas Electric and other electric railways in Texas. The museum is open from 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Saturdays. For more information, contact Plano Parks & Recreation Dept., 1409 Avenue K, Plano, TX 75074, or on line at: *Planoparks.org*.

PLEASE SEND any light rail, transit and commuter rail news items or correspondence directly to Prof. George M. Smerk Institute for Urban Transportation, 825 E. 8th Street, Bloomington, IN 47408-3805.

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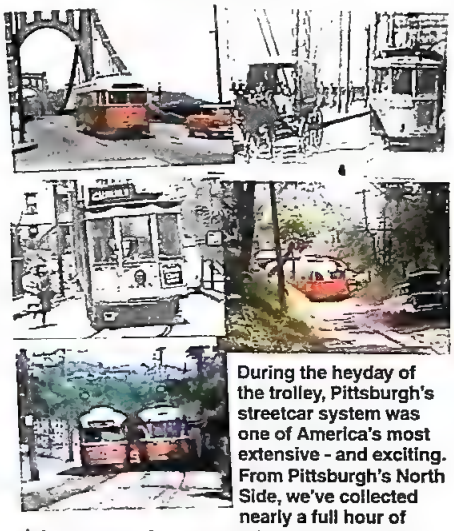

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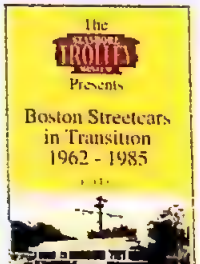

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Countdown to Acela

The High-Speed Era Arrives

by
Wes Vernon

THE LAST TIME I rode a train this smooth, I was in France. It was 1991. At that time, we were served a bounteous breakfast from a rolling aisle cart, as the countryside whizzed by at 180 miles per hour between Brussels and Paris. Of course, the Europeans around me were nonchalant about it all. For this American, it was an amazing experience.

On November 16, 2000, those memories came flooding back as my own country launched its high speed rail era. Not at 180 m.p.h. Even the Acela Express's very highest speed of 150 m.p.h. will be confined to a couple of New England states. But you have to remember we're playing catch-up here for the "lost generation" of the mid-20th Century that abandoned trains.

And now the Acela Express was about to escort American railroading out of the 20th Century with a modicum of dignity.

"The American people want trains. And they're going to get them," assured Virgina's former Governor and Amtrak Board member Linwood Holton as he addressed the group of invited guests in Washington Union Station's ornate B. Smith's restaurant which, earlier in the century, served as the presidential waiting room for every chief executive from William Howard Taft to John F. Kennedy

And talk about a bounteous breakfast! The buffet spread in the upscale B. Smith's was appropriate to the occasion.

Out to the platform where Amtrak Chairman and Wisconsin Governor Tommy Thompson, a cheerleader whose positive attitude on anything he pursues knows few bounds, declared "We deliver!"

For me, this ride was personal. I can recall what can diplomatically be called "leaner times." That was Amtrak's original inaugurationon May 1, 1971. On that day a group of us boarded the locomotiveless Metroliner equipment inherited from the bankrupt Penn Central. That train was built to go 160 m.p.h. Fat chance on the track of that era!

But when we arrived at Penn Station, then Transportation Secretary John Volpe escorted us across the platform where he took our questions in an old inherited refurbished coach. There he told us of all the wondrous things Amtrak would accomplish. The official line was that in two years Amtrak would make a "profit." Most of us knew better, but there were political reasons for that goal.

Once the Acela was out on the road, having left Washington at 9:55 a.m. so as to give some small leeway to the Metroliner that was to leave at 10:00, I knew I would never look at the Metroliners in the same way again. I had forgotten that train rides could be this quiet.

For Governor Thompson, the ride was personal. His heart and soul was in this project. "I know you've supported Amtrak for a long time", he said, "and we really appreciate it." And on he went down the aisle greeting the other guests. In 1996, he and I had discussed Amtrak on the old CBS Radio "Crosstalk" program.

For Larry Tkachenko, this ride was personal. The veteran railroader was rewarded for his long loyal service to the company with an assignment as conductor for this inaugural run of Amtrak's entry into the high speed era. Tkachenko has been with Amtrak since 1973, working Metroliners, inter-city long haul trains "every piece of equipment that's run up and down the corridor, I've been on." He's had some freight experience too.

Conductor Tkachenko, who doubles as Legislative Representative of the United Transportation Union (UTU), has memories of Amtrak's bad old days back in the 70's when much of the time air conditioning and heating systems would break down on the trains. "I think at that time, we had a collection of equipment, basically donated, and we were at the mercy of the system with regard to maintenance and the parts that were available. We were capital-starved at (that) point in time."

And as for the High Speed Rail Investment Act, now pending on Capitol Hill, this UTU lobbyist says, "Every person has a stake in it in the U.S. whether they realize it." The HSRIA is aimed at bolstering high speed trains, not just in the Northeast Corridor, but throughout America.

"For a country this prosperous not to have a first class transportation system is ludicrous. Why would people spend their time waiting in cars or waiting in toll booths when they can be riding a train at 150 miles an hour?"

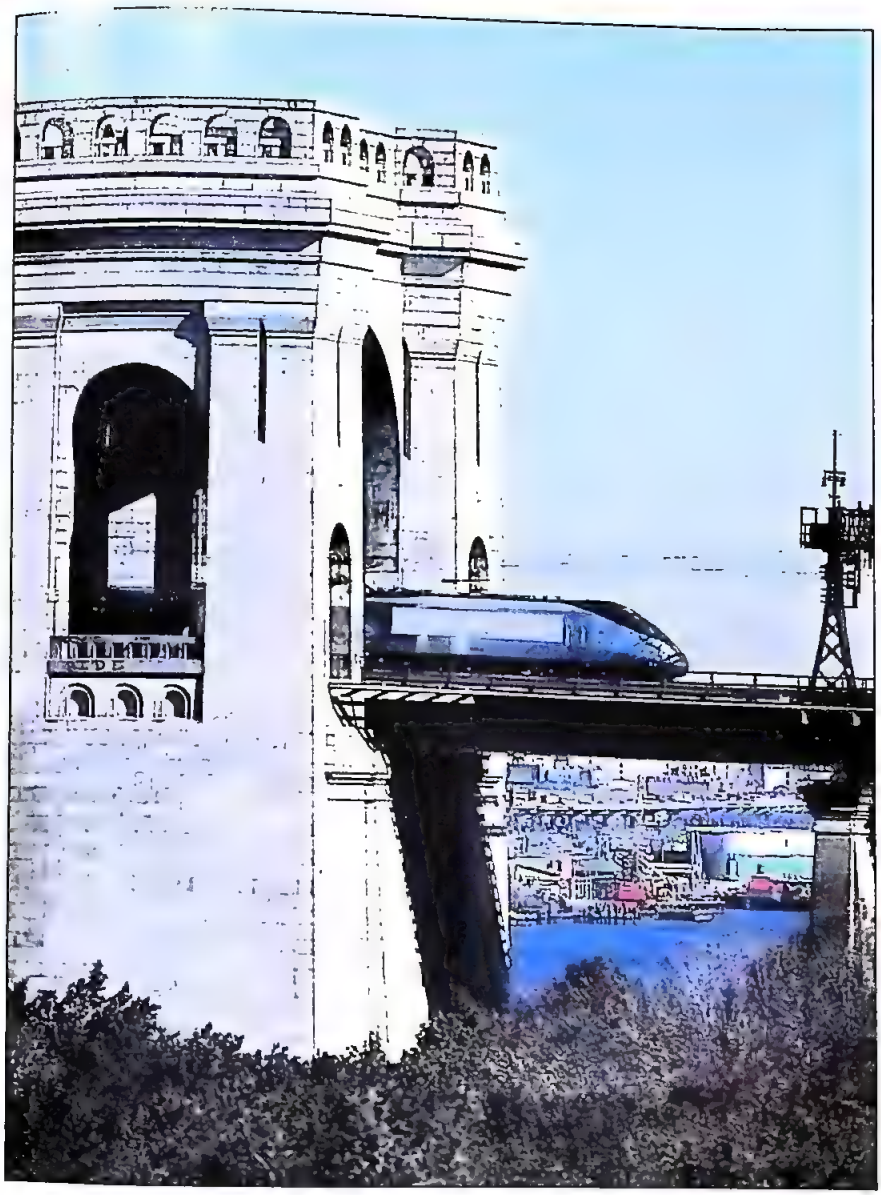
For Amtrak President George Warrington, this ride was personal. When he took over as CEO on short notice, he didn't think he wanted the job on a permanent basis. Now this super deluxe train was ushering in a new era on his watch. "Competition from the air shuttles?" asked the reporters who mobbed the CEO in the car behind First Class where the VIP's (board members and elected officials) were seated. "Our base Northeast corridor business of about 12 million trips a year, we expect to grow to 15 million plus per year when we're fully operational, after all 20 trainsets have been introduced." Amtrak's 70/30 rail/air market share between Washington and New York would go even higher with "a significant penetration". And as for the company's 30/70 rate on the old milk runs between New York and Boston, Warrington sees that being turned upside down once the Acela cuts close to two hours off the current running times at 150 m.p.h. "Absolutely!" says the Amtrak boss, "Over 12 to 18 months." 24 at the outside.

Former Amtrak employee, now major critic, Joseph Vranich was quoted by the *Washington Post* as questioning whether the trip time, Boston to New York, will be enough to compete with air shuttles. He was not quoted as saying whether that counts the time the planes have to wait on the runway in bad weather, while the more weatherproof train glides merrily on its way.

As for the future of other corridors, Warrington repeated what he's said many times, "This is all about money, and you get what you pay for." That is an allusion to the hard fact that if rail passenger service is to provide what Governor Holton described at breakfast as "the third leg of the transportation stool", think infrastructure — just like the highways and airways — and think *money!* Or as Amtrak boosters would say, think HSRIA.

What a smooth ride! The NEC trackage, although better than in most other parts of the country, is not as smooth as what we found between Brussels and Paris. When we hit the bumps, you could tell they were there, but the Acela handled them. You were not jolted. Its tilt mechanism took those corners, and you felt American railroading had made an early entry into the 21st Century, or what our European and Japanese friends would consider basic to the mid-20th. You felt we were heading toward their league at long last.

For Michael Dukakis, the ride was personal. "You and I have been following this story for a long time," said the former Massachusetts governor who in 1975 was telling me how he would forget the chauffeured limo and ride the Boston "T" to work every day. Dukakis had once expressed



The Acela Express passes through the south tower of the Hell Gate Bridge in the Astoria section of Queens, New York City, on a break-in run on November 2, 2000. The trainset made several trips in the days leading up to the official inauguration on November 16th.

Countdown to Acela

The First Revenue Trip

by
Joseph M. Calisi

ON DECEMBER 11, 2000, I participated in one of the most critical and historic moments in Amtrak history, the first revenue run of the Acela Express. This gem of modern technology made the historic trip 13 months after its initial delivery target date, but the train is well worth the wait. The entire six-car train represents a model of service, comfort and ergonomic design. The cars are spacious and quiet, with a light and airy visual flavor. Amtrak personnel are courteous and attentive on and off the train. It is obvious that Amtrak has worked very hard to get everything right on the Acela Express and knows the image it wants to project. By and large, Amtrak achieved its goals on Acela's initial run.

At 7:47 a.m., I boarded the Acela Express as train number 2170 on the track No.9 platform of New York's Pennsylvania Station, which recently celebrated its 90th anniversary. Upon entering the train, I was immediately greeted by my gracious hosts and directed to a first class seat. I loaded my coat and camera gear into the very large overhead storage cabins with plenty of room to spare, and sat in seat 6A. I was pleased by the comfortable seat, which had so much legroom that I could cross my legs quite comfortably.

When the train departed at 8:05, I was offered coffee, tea and either orange or cranberry juice before breakfast. Coffee and cranberry juice were quickly brought to my seat, along with a breakfast menu. Meals are included in the price of first class tickets. When my cheese omelet with home fries arrived, a fellow passenger voiced his opinion that I had ordered "a man's breakfast" in quantity and quality. The serving tray contained coffee, a fresh New York-style bagel, and some apple butter in a side dish along with the omelet. The taste was something else, and I replied to the other passenger that the food tasted even better than it looked. After breakfast, the attendant brought *The Washington Post* and a fresh cup of coffee for my reading and drinking pleasure. My overall opinion was that I could get used to this type of service and travel. Imagine getting first class service on a train at airline coach prices!

After quickly reading about the latest happenings on the Presidential voting process, I inspected the rest of the train. I found that Business Class seating is just as comfortable as my first class seat, with the same audio choices and legroom I enjoyed earlier that morning.

a curiosity about a private rail car trip I had planned down south in the '70s. He was tracking all this long before he ever became Vice Chairman of the Amtrak board.

And you could say the trip was personal for Sen. Frank Lautenberg (D.-N.J.), as well. He was aboard one of the earlier test trains at 162 m.p.h. a few years back. The co-sponsor of HSRIA wants that bill passed and signed into law before he sings his swan song when leaving the Senate in January. Now he was contemplating 135 m.p.h. before the New England segment goes up to 150. I told him I thought the best opportunity for that was the four-track right of way between Trenton and Newark.

Something to nibble on while shooting up the NEC in this "train of the future?" Of course. Hors d'oeuvres extraordinaire, served at your seat. How about cantaloupe with cream cheese, bread and butter or cold open red potato stuffed with cream cheese, just to mention two selections?

We zipped through Baltimore a half hour out of D.C. Metroliner makes in 35 to 37 minutes. Wilmington in 1:02 hours, Metroliner at 1:23. Philadelphia in 1:24, Metroliner at 1:45. Even allowing for the fact that the Metroliner makes some stops, whereas we were non-stop from D.C. to New York, that's still a favorable comparison, as was our arrival into New York's Penn Station two minutes early with a total time of 2:26. Tell me that you can chalk up the Metroliner's standard 2:59, 33 minutes longer, entirely to our non-stop schedule. I don't think so.

Just a few minutes before our arrival, Larry Tkachenko went on the intercom and invited us to raise our glasses of champagne and toast a remarkable journey on a rare day.

I'll drink to that.

ABOVE: **The Acela Express VIP train arrives in New York City's Pennsylvania Station at 12:55 p.m. on November 16, 2000 after a non-stop run from Washington, D.C. It will soon depart for the non-stop inaugural run to Boston.** BELOW: **Former Massachusetts Governor Michael Dukakis (center) and other supporters are at South Station in Boston for the departure of the first Washington-bound Acela Express train No.2175 on December 11, 2000.**

The Bistro car is designed for eating at a barstool and watching satellite television at the same time. I was pleased to note that multiple brands of beer were available on tap with a nice selection of food items for sale at the vending table.

Passenger opinions

The patrons on the train this day can be described as mostly business people with a generous sprinkling of railfans. I concentrated on interviewing business travelers for this story, because they are the target ridership. They came to a general consensus of positive opinions and praise for Amtrak on the overall design, quietness and comfort level. For example, Todd Moni of Buffalo, New York, stated that ". . . the Acela Express is like dessert, where comfort and leisure are a priority. I like everything the Acela Express represents, and it is a viable alternative to airline travel." Mr. Moni added that ". . . I feel like I'm taking a vacation on the Acela, and my expectations of this train were exceeded. It's something special." Travel writer Robert Christopher of Milford, Connecticut, favorably compared the Acela to the Eurostar he recently rode through the Chunnel in Europe. Doug Alexander, the Rail Program Manager of the Georgia Rail Passenger Authority, which seeks to establish a high-speed rail corridor in the southeastern United States, was glowingly ecstatic about Acela, calling it ". . . an amazing change from other Amtrak equipment. The first class service is on par with that of the Ritz-Carlton Hotel." Mr. Alexander added that "I'm happy for Amtrak ,and this event is on par with the driving of the golden spike in American railroading history. I hope for similar but non-electric equipment for use elsewhere in the country."

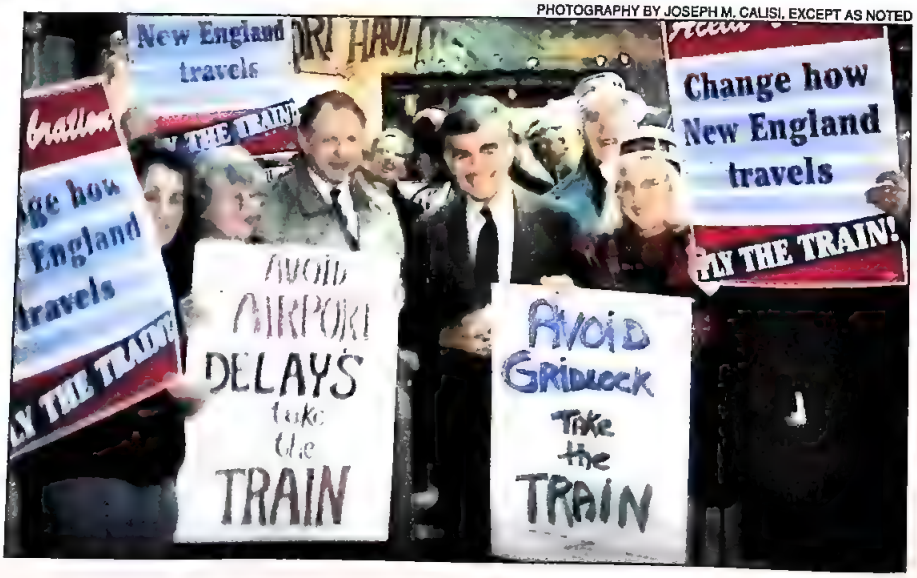
A majority of the opinions were positive towards Amtrak, but the balance of the comments I heard sounded more like an indictment of air travel. Among the pleasantries cited by Acela passengers were the comfortable seats and extra leg room, extremely attentive service, less cost than air shuttles, the ability to use laptops and cell phones throughout the trip, the big bathrooms, no long check-in lines, and not being x-rayed at the gate, and the reminder that "your seat was designed to be a floatation device and please buckle your seatbelt" message was not heard by anyone on the train. Incidentally, American Airlines announced on the same day of this train ride the initiation of eight more flights from JFK Airport in New York and the beginning of many hourly Newark-to-Boston shuttle flights, promising even more delays and crowded skies and airports.

The challenge

The *Boston Globe* sent two of its staff writers to New York; Raphael Lewis departed the Big Apple on the Acela Express and the other writer, Matthew Brelis, used its direct competition, the air shuttle, to return to Beantown. The weather in New York that day was cloudy and very foggy in the early morning hours. New York's LaGuardia Airport was fogged in, and initially things looked good for the Acela.

Mr. Brelis' trials and tribulations while trying to use and ultimately flying on the air shuttle were well chronicled in his report which exemplifies everything that can go wrong with air travel: fog, a missing co-pilot due to traffic getting to the airport, cancelled flights, rushing from one air terminal to another trying to book a flight, needing to use a corporate discount for a cheaper fare and arriving late to his scheduled final destination considerably worse for the wear. It is interesting to note that airline personnel of two different airlines suggested that Mr. Brelis use Amtrak and he was handed the new Amtrak timetable at the Delta and US Air Shuttle check-in gates. Mr. Lewis, on the other hand, spent only $120.00 for his rail fare, and arrived in Post Office Square in Boston ready for the day's work two minutes after Mr. Brelis arrived from his harrowing voyage (which included two taxi rides totaling $45.00 and an airfare of $160.00 on the Delta air shuttle. The Acela arrived in Boston twelve minutes late at 11:43 a.m. but nine minutes of this was attributed to a local NBC-affiliated video crew that didn't get off the train in time in New Haven, Connecticut.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY JOSEPH M. CALISI, EXCEPT AS NOTED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watch the world roll by as you put your feet up. Before I knew it, it was 8:45 p.m., we were arriving on time in New York City and the voyage was over.

In all fairness there were a few glitches, but they may have been corrected by the time you read this. For example, the meals in first class were delivered late, but service improved in subsequent trips as the crews gained more experience and became more familiar with the equipment.

Announcements, such as the first time the train reached 150 miles per hour in revenue service, were not heard throughout the train, but this was corrected in time for the afternoon run. The only real complaint I heard on this train was the lack of speed on many segments of the Northeast Corridor. Upper-level Amtrak personnel monitor these trips very carefully, and recommendations for corrections are implemented immediately in subsequent trips. My personal complaint was that there were no Acela Express items for sale and there was no ceremonial "first revenue trip ticket" available on the first day.

In retrospect, the trip felt more like a ship gliding on the gentle waters of a lake than a fast train riding on rails. If you have a chance to ride the Acela Express, I highly recommended it. Any frayed nerves I had prior to boarding the train were quickly calmed, replaced by excitement at the level of pleasure I was experiencing. I can't wait to try this ride again.

The other three minutes of the delay occurred because a Metro-North train broke down during the morning rush hour and required switching the Acela several times over slow crossovers. Even when you figure-in the twelve-minute delay, the bottom line result is a hands-down victory for the "tortoise."

Heading back home

I rode first class on the return trip to New York, wishing to sample the evening service as well. I experienced the same delightful pattern as the morning train of quick and attentive service, from boarding at Boston until I got off at New York's Penn Station. The rib-eye steak dinner was perfectly cooked and carefully brought to my seat at 8:00 p.m. The asparagus spears were tender and the roll was fresh and warm. Beer and nuts are available before and after dinner to help you

ABOVE: **Doug Alexander, a city councilman from Atlanta, Georgia, is hard at work in the first class section of the first revenue Acela Express on December 11, 2000.** BELOW: **The Acela VIP train passes through Cornwalls Heights, Pennsylvania (just north of Philadelphia) on November 16, 2000.**

FRANK W. POWELL

Countdown to Acela

The Second Day

by
Leo King

SOME DAYS are pretty good. Others are horrendous. That was Amtrak's scenario on December 12, 2000, the second day of Acela service. The day before, the high-speed train arrived in Boston about twelve minutes late on its first trip. On the 12th, it very nearly never arrived at all.

Tuesday morning was supposed to be a bright day. Not weatherwise, because it was still bleak (at least it wasn't snowing), but it was going to be my first ride on one of the fancy new express trains. It did not happen.

I deadheaded west from my hometown of Providence, Rhode Island, on No.131, an Acela Regional with HHP-8 No.655 on the point. A few deadheading conductors were also aboard 131, on their way to New Haven to ride back on Acela No.2150. When they boarded at South Station and Route 128, none had an inkling they would not be riding the express train today, nor did I. Not until they were aboard did an assistant conductor report that the northward trainset never left our nation's capital.

At 3:00 a.m. Tuesday morning the Advanced Civil Speed Enforcement System (ACSES — basically fancy cab signals) equipment on the Acela Express train was acting up so much that mechanical forces in Washington's Ivy City Yard deemed the train not serviceable. The equipment was repaired, but not in time for departure. Amtrak tried to prepare its only other available Acela Express train, trainset No.6 (engines 2030-2031), which had been conditionally accepted on December 10th, but inspectors found problems there as well, including a broken freezer and no hot water in the café car. A Metroliner was dispatched in Acela's place, but it sustained an engine failure at Stratford, Connecticut, (MP 59) with 90 people aboard. The train arrived in Boston two hours and nine minutes late, according to media reports.

Meanwhile, the repaired express train deadheaded from Washington to Boston later in the day to make the afternoon's train No.2175, due out of South Station at 5:10 p.m. Since I couldn't ride the Acela Express, I returned home on Acela Regional No.170 with AEM7 No.909 leading. When I got back to Providence, I went straight to the ticket counter. The ticket agent had no clue I worked for Amtrak, but as soon as I said "2150" he knew exactly what was coming. I told him I wanted to exchange it for another ticket between New Haven and Boston. I got an upgrade without even asking for it. I went from "first class" to "business class." Now let's see what December 19th brings.

Railfan & Railroad's Guide
TO TRAINS

RAILROAD MUSEUMS, TOURIST LINES, and DINNER TRAINS

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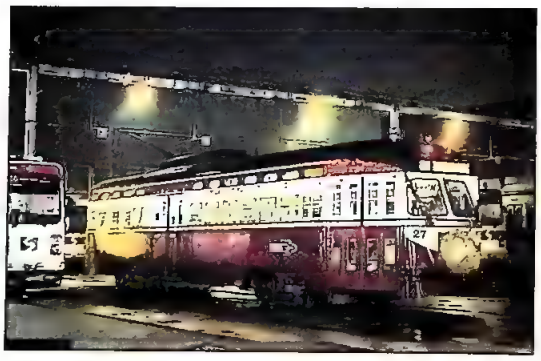
PHOTOGRAPHY BY STEVE BARRY / LIGHTING BY STEVE BARRY and JOHN TULLY

Have a holly, jolly trolley



THERE MAY BE no better way to see a city during the holiday season than from a streetcar. On December 16, 2000, the Wilmington Chapter NRHS chartered one of SEPTA's historic PCCs for a tour of Philadelphia. With R&R contributor William Monaghan at the controls, "Red Arrow" PCC 2799 toured the streets of southwest Philadelphia and the neighboring boroughs of Darby and Yeadon, and also made a spirited run through the Center City subway tunnel. Several photo stops were made along the route, featuring Christmas lights on houses along with the decorated streetcar. —*S.B.*

TOP: SEPTA "Red Arrow" PCC 2799 poses on Chester Avenue in front of the Gables Bed & Breakfast on December 16, 2000. ABOVE: Prior to departure, 2799 pauses at the Elmwood car barn ("depot" in SEPTA parlance) in southwest Philadelphia. BELOW: The holiday trolley's lights reflect off the rain-soaked streets in Yeadon.

Pssst. . . hey buddy, wanna get published?

THERE SEEMS TO BE a widespread impression among many of our readers (not *you*, of course; you're much too cool) that we editors are minor gods of the high iron. Yeah, we spend most of the week out shooting trains, using all our inside info to get the great shots of the big stories. Then around deadline time, Hal has to pry the cameras from our grimy little hands, wrestle us into our offices, and command us to produce the best darn railfan magazine around. And because we're gods, you see, we keep those great shots to ourselves.

In your dreams. The reality is that we rely mostly on our far-flung faithful readers for news and features. So read on, and discover how to improve the odds that your pictures and stories will get published.

For news, timeliness is next to godliness. Don't wait the three months it takes you to use up a roll of film to send us a "news" photo. Stale news is no news. If you want to get published, sometimes you've got to eat a few frames of film. Actually, you can put those frames to good use by bracketing your exposures and trying a few different angles to thoroughly cover your subject, assuming it's standing still. If you're showing a locomotive or train in an unusual location, make sure some identifiable, and not too arcane, landmark is visible to establish the location. Sometimes it's a no-brainer, like working the World Trade Center into a photo of a foreign unit in former Conrail territory. And sometimes you've got to work at it. While we're on the subject of photography, let me emphasize that for publication, we need *slides*, not prints. A slide is a first generation image which will yield the best possible magazine reproduction. Just nail the composition, exposure, and focus, and you'll have a winner.

When it comes to caption information, don't assume a heck of a lot of knowledge on our part. We may know all about the Canadian Pacific Aroostook Subdivision or the Lehigh & New England, but the Frisco out of St. Louis? You talkin' to *me*? So if a trip you photographed ran over four segments of BNSF, specify in your caption information the endpoints and former owner of each segment. If you're shooting a new or especially, used or rebuilt locomotive, try to get the number off the builder's plate. That'll help us track down the unit's origins. If we just had the builder's number on the NICTD 1000 in RAILNEWS this month, we could have told you more about the unit. (My guess is it's an ex-MP GP35 rebuilt to GP38 specs, but maybe I'm just weird.) Try to get as much information on all aspects of the event or train as possible; we really want to be accurate and complete. Not that we'll use all the information, but it's better to have too much than not enough. And don't forget to put your name and address on *everything* you send us. We're getting to the age where we'll put something down and two seconds later. . . Where was I? Oh, right. . . It's very helpful to have your e-mail address and daytime phone number, too, in case we need to clarify some details.— *W.C.L.*

Old shirts

Well, the time finally came around. My wife, Genie, said we need more closet space. And the closet space we need to expand into houses my t-shirt collection. Now, I don't wear t-shirts very much anymore — you'll usually find me trackside in a golf shirt in nice weather — but up until a few years ago I was definitely in "been there, done that, bought the t-shirt" mode, with the result being an accumulation of maybe 200 t-shirts. Most show evidence of hard use, covered with permanent soot from steam excursions or just plain worn out after too many hot summer days. A lot have a soda stain on the chest (in the exact same spot) where Diet Coke dribbled out of the bottle while I was trying to drink and drive. All have been stored on hangers in the spare closet, but now it's time to use that space for more useful things. So one evening I started pulling shirts off hangers and placing them in a box. At the same time, I took a stroll down memory lane.

The one location where I had accumulated the most shirts was the Strasburg Rail Road. I often hit the Road to Paradise a couple of times a year, and each year they seemed to put out an even better shirt than the last. The oldest Strasburg shirt in the collection is a plain blue shirt with the railroad's oval herald. It has a lot of holes in it and really should be thrown out. A couple of the shirts feature my favorite tourist line engine, 2-10-0 No.90. None of them have 4-8-0 No.475 — I guess Strasburg acquired that engine after I stopped collecting shirts.

Let's see — here are several shirts from the annual Hoboken Terminal Festival. The first one shows the terminal. One has the terminal and some clowns. Another has just clowns. I don't know why I bought that one.

Ah, here's my church bowling league shirt with the three patches from our "three-peat" championship team in the early 1990s. And next to it is my black Colorado & Southern golf shirt. I wondered where that one got to — it goes back into the "active" bin.

A couple of shirts definitely have "artistic license." There are shirts from both the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic and the East Broad Top that show steam locomotives with diamond stacks. And there's one awful shirt from the Long Island G5 "Project 39" restoration. Another golf shirt that has shown a lot of wear has the 50th Anniversary logo of the Rocky Mountain Railroad Club. My trip to Denver for that group's celebration led to my first article in R&R in 1988.

Concert shirts are also sprinkled in amongst the trains. There's George Strait and Ricky Skaggs and Radney Foster. Many shirts are from NRHS Conventions, including a nice one from the Chicago gathering in 1993. There are also shirts from Asheville '89, Cincinnati '84 and

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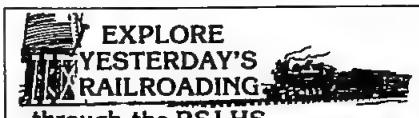
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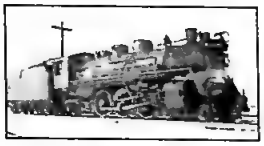
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others. Also from the Chicago convention is a nice shirt for Union Pacific Challenger 3985's 50th Anniversary.

Speaking of 50th Anniversaries, here's one of EMD FT 103. The first time I wore this white shirt I spilled soda on it and it got covered by soot. Don't wear white shirts on steam excursions.

Some of my favorite locomotives are featured on shirts. A nice black one has Reading 4-8-4 2124 in yellow. The shirt with Burlington O5 5632 is about worn out. The next shirt is from my old church softball league team — we got to pick our own numbers and I went for 14 to match Pete Rose.

Favorite railroads — shirts for the Western Pacific and Pennsylvania, and two for the Denver & Rio Grande Western. The D&RGW shirt with SD40-T-2s on it is also well-worn (somehow that clown shirt from the Hoboken Festival isn't nearly as worn out). Events — the last run of the GG1s and Lackawanna m.u.'s all had that special shirt. Ditto for the first (and only?) steam run on the Middletown & Hummelstown.

Soon it will be time to close the box and shove it to the back of the closet. And even though I don't wear these shirts anymore, it still was fun to go back through the years. When Genie says it's time to clean the closet floors ten years from now, I can do it all over again. And don't even get me started on my collection of railroad baseball-style caps. I have more of them than I have t-shirts.

Steve

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Railfan & Railroad Advertising Index for March 2001

A

A&R Productions 52
Anchor Videos 19

B

B.R.M.N.A. 11
Barnard, Roberts & Co. 16
Blubonnet Inn Bed & Breakfast 62
Book Depot 50,51

C

D. Carlton Railbooks 16
Carstens Publications 24,56
Catenary Video Productions 8
Central Electric Railfans' Association 8,25
Chicago & Northwestern Historical Society 20
Colorado Railroad Museum 20

D

DPA-LTA Enterprises 18,56
Daylight Images 63
The Depot Attic 18
The Depot Attic at Strasburg 23
Depot Square Publishing 16
George H. Drury 11

E

EastRail 2001 64
Electro Video 20
Erie Lackawanna Historical Society 24

F

Four Ways West Publications 24

G

Golden Spike Enterprises 11
Grand Scales Quarterly 53
Green Frog Productions 5

H

Herron Rail Services 21
Hi-Iron Railroad Videos 16
Highball Productions 9

I

Illinios Railway Museum 62
LMT Video 18
Carleton F. Loucks 23

M

Mark I Video 10,12
Edgar T. Mead 23
Morning Sun Books 7
Metaphor, Inc. 63
Multipower International, Inc. 23
Museum & Tourist Line Directory 62

N

Napa Valley Wine Train 62
National Railway Historical Society 52
New York Central System Historical Society 63

P

Pentrex ....Cover IV
Plets Express 12

R

Railcom 18
Railfan & Railroad 55
Railroad Avenue Enterprises 22
Railroad Research Publications 19
Rails 'N' Shafts 17
Railway And Locomotive Historical Society 63
Raritan Bay Hobbies 8
Revelation Video 14
Ben Rohrbeck 56
Ron's Books ....Cover III

S

Schrader Enterprises 18
Seashore Trolley Museum 57
Signal Computer Consultants 25
Simmons-Boardman Books, Inc. 13
Sundance Publications 19,21

T

TLC Publishing 15
Trackside Prints 7
Trackside Video 19
Trainfans.com ....Cover II
TrainWeb 20
Transit Gloria Mundi 57

V

Valhalla Video 11

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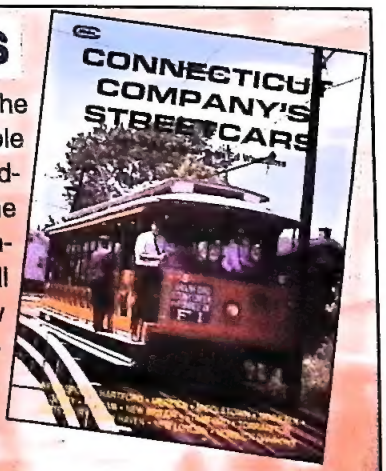

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